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Office of Vocational and Adult Education
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Smaller Learning Communities Program Application for Grants

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Note: Copies of the forms listed above are also available at the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://ocfo.ed.gov/grntinfo/appforms.htm>.

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1. Letter from Assistant Secretaries Susan B. Neuman and Carol D'Amico



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARIES

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program. The purpose of this program is to support the planning, implementation, or expansion of small, safe, and successful learning environments in large public high schools, through competitive grants to local educational agencies (LEAs). The SLC program is authorized under section 10105 of Part A of Title X of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The Smaller Learning Communities program was first funded in the Department's FY 2000 Appropriations Act, which included \$45 million for the program. In October 2000, the U.S. Department of Education made the first awards under this new program, providing funding to a total of 149 applicants (84 received one-year planning grants and 65 received three-year implementation grants). Currently, a total of 349 schools are being served through this program nationwide. Awards were and will again be made to LEAs applying on behalf of large public high schools or large high schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. For the purposes of this program, a large high school is defined as a school that includes grades 11 and 12 and enrolls at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above.

For FY 2001, Congress appropriated an additional \$125 million for the Smaller Learning Communities program. Under this competition, the Secretary will award \$96,700,000 in new grants. This is an investment in student achievement, which will present school communities with increased choice. Successful applicants will present applications that ensure that all high schools proposed as participants will become effective and safe environments where all students feel known, supported, and motivated to succeed in college and chosen careers. The competitive applications will suggest research-based methods intended to meet this goal. Under the statute, grant funds may be used to redesign schools into structures such as academies, house plans, schools-within-a-school, and magnet programs. Funds may also be used for personalization strategies that complement or take advantage of smaller learning communities. Examples of such strategies include freshman transition activities, multi-year groupings, alternative scheduling, advisory or advocate systems, and academic teaming.

This application package contains all of the necessary instructions and forms needed to submit a complete application to the U. S. Department of Education. This package also includes information on the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications, non-regulatory guidance, and a synthesis of the literature on small schools and smaller learning communities, all of which provides important information regarding the FY 2001 grant competition.

Due to the interest in introducing smaller learning communities to large high schools in many areas, we expect this year's grant competition to be extremely competitive. Please refer to the SLC Web site, <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SLCP/> for further information about the program and how to apply. Questions may also be sent to the program's email address at: smallerlearningcommunities@ed.gov.

We look forward to receiving your application and appreciate your efforts to promote smaller learning communities.

Sincerely,

Susan B. Neuman, Ed.D.

Assistant Secretary
for Elementary and
Secondary Education.

Carol D'Amico

Assistant Secretary
for Vocational and
Adult Education.

2. Introducing the Smaller Learning Communities program

The Smaller Learning Communities program provides financial incentives to encourage large high schools to undertake the planning, implementation, and expansion of smaller learning communities through research-based restructuring. Methods for recasting large schools as a set of smaller learning communities are included in the Conference Report for the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000 (Pub. L. 106-113, H.R. Conference Report No. 106-479, at 1240(1999)). Examples of downsizing activities that restructure large high schools include:

- (1) Creating academies or sub-groups;
- (2) Creating house plans either across grade levels or by grade levels;
- (3) Creating schools-within-a-school; and,
- (4) Creating magnet programs.

Additionally, funds can be used to support strategies that complement or take advantage of restructured environments in order to create a more personalized learning environment for students. Examples of strategies that make schools “feel” smaller include:

- (1) Freshman transition activities;
- (2) Multi-year groups;
- (3) Alternative scheduling;
- (4) Adult advocate or advisory systems; and,
- (5) Academic teaming.

The definitions and terms used above are more fully described in Appendix A.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Research on school size has stimulated a widespread movement towards smaller schools and the creation of smaller learning communities within large high schools. In 1996, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, in conjunction with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, issued a report titled *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution*. The report recommends that high schools break into units of no more than 600 students: (1) to ensure that teachers and students get to know and care about each other; and (2) to provide teachers with opportunities to use a variety of instructional strategies that accommodate and engage individual learners.

These recommendations are supported further by a growing body of research on the association between smaller learning environments and positive student outcomes. In general, smaller learning communities have been found to have positive effects on students’ relationships with peers, teachers, and staff, and their extracurricular participation. Students participating in smaller learning communities also have been found to have higher course passage rates, better attendance, and fewer suspensions compared to demographically similar students in more traditional high school settings (Oxley, 1990; Fine 1994). Further studies suggest that the benefits of smaller schools may include higher rates of school satisfaction, school completion or postsecondary enrollment (Raywid 1995; Klonsky 1995; Funk and Bailey 1999; Kemple and Snipes 2000). Finally, research suggests that smaller school size may even help compensate

for the adverse effects of poverty on student achievement in elementary, middle and secondary schools, (Rural School and Community Trust: <http://www.ruraledu.org/>).

National statistics show that approximately 70 percent of American high school students today attend schools that enroll more than 1,000 students. Nationwide, over 4,500 high schools enroll 1,000 or more students. Over time, high schools have become increasingly larger. While some high schools have realized the benefits of smaller learning communities and have restructured and reorganized, there are thousands of high schools that have not yet begun the process of creating smaller learning communities.

Researchers have suggested that the positive outcomes associated with smaller schools stem from the schools' ability to create close, personal environments in which teachers can work collaboratively, with each other and with a small set of students, to challenge students and support learning. Restructuring large high schools into smaller learning communities is an attempt to create those same conditions that promote higher student achievement and improved performance on State content-based assessments. Implementing strategies that take advantage of the smaller learning community (e.g., block scheduling, interdisciplinary teaching, and advisories to name a few) can help move the restructuring effort forward and better support improved student achievement.

a. Who is eligible to receive a grant?

Local educational agencies (LEAs), applying on behalf of large public high schools, or schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA schools), are eligible to apply for a planning or implementation grant. "Large high schools" are schools that include grades 11 and 12 and enroll at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above. Applicants may work independently or in partnership with other public agencies and/or private non-profit organizations. A group of LEAs is also eligible to apply, following procedures specified in 34 CFR 75.127-129 of EDGAR. For the purposes of this program, an individual LEA or group application may not request funding for more than ten individually eligible schools. LEAs must include the name(s) of the eligible school(s) and the number of students enrolled in each school. Applicants may provide eligibility data, based upon enrollment during the current school year or the most recently completed school year or on the date of application.

b. What will be the time period, size and number of grants?

PLANNING GRANTS

Planning grants will fund activities up to twelve (12) months. For a planning grant, an LEA may receive, on behalf of a single school, \$25,000 to \$50,000 per project. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may request up to \$250,000 per planning grant. For the purposes of this grant, a group may include a maximum of 10 schools. As this program is designed to finance direct student services and local redesign and improvement efforts, districts must stay within the minimum and maximum school allocations when determining their group award request. Therefore, to ensure sufficient planning funds at the local level, LEAs may not request funds for more than 10 schools under a single application.

The chart below provides eligible ranges for awards under the planning grant:

Number of Schools in LEA application	Award Ranges
One School	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Two Schools	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Three Schools	\$75,000 - \$150,000
Four Schools	\$100,000 - \$200,000
Five Schools	\$125,000 - \$250,000
Six Schools	\$150,000 - \$250,000
Seven Schools	\$175,000 - \$250,000
Eight Schools	\$200,000 - \$250,000
Nine Schools	\$225,000 - \$250,000
Ten Schools	\$250,000

To ensure maximum flexibility and competitiveness, LEAs may submit multiple applications targeting distinct schools within each funding category. However, LEAs may not apply on behalf of a single high school in more than one application. Schools that received support through planning grants in the 2000 competition are not eligible to receive additional support for planning under the 2001 competition.

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Implementation grants may fund activities for up to thirty-six (36) months. For an implementation grant, LEAs may receive, on behalf of a single school, \$250,000 to \$500,000 per project. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may request up to \$2,500,000 per implementation grant. As this program is designed to finance direct student services and local redesign and improvement efforts, districts must stay within the minimum and maximum school allocations when determining their group award request. Therefore, in order to ensure sufficient implementation funds at the local level, LEAs may not request funds for more than 10 schools under a single application.

The chart below provides eligible ranges for awards under the implementation grant:

Number of Schools in LEA application	Award Ranges
One School	\$250,000 - \$500,000
Two Schools	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000
Three Schools	\$750,000 - \$1,500,000
Four Schools	\$1,000,000 - \$2,000,000
Five Schools	\$1,250,000 - \$2,500,000
Six Schools	\$1,500,000 - \$2,500,000
Seven Schools	\$1,750,000 - \$2,500,000
Eight Schools	\$2,000,000 - \$2,500,000
Nine Schools	\$2,250,000 - \$2,500,000
Ten Schools	\$2,500,000

To ensure maximum flexibility and competitiveness, LEAs may submit multiple applications targeting distinct schools within each application. However, LEAs may not apply on behalf of a single high school in more than one application. Schools that benefited from FY 2000 implementation awards are not eligible to receive additional support under this competition. The total amount an LEA may receive through any combination of awards, in any fiscal year under this program, may not exceed \$5 million.

NUMBER OF GRANTS

The Secretary anticipates making approximately 190 new planning grant awards and approximately 90 new implementation grant awards under this competition. However, please note that the Department of Education is not bound by any estimates in this document.

c. What activities are allowable?

PLANNING GRANTS

Examples of activities that may be conducted under a planning grant include—

- (1) Conducting a needs assessment at each school site to determine the academic needs of students and the required skills and resources for addressing those needs;
- (2) Studying the opportunities for restructuring a large school as a set of smaller learning communities;

- (3) Investigating instructional strategies that are appropriate for smaller learning communities;
- (4) Building consensus among key stakeholders;
- (5) Assessing staff training and development needs relative to the needs assessment;
- (6) Analyzing administrative support for the creation of the smaller learning environments;
- (7) Developing strategies to include parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities restructuring effort; and
- (8) Preparing an implementation plan.

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Examples of activities that may be conducted under an implementation grant include—

- (1) Implementing and expanding strategies for creating the smaller learning community or communities within the designated large high schools;
- (2) Implementing and expanding complementary personalization strategies as well as effective and innovative changes in curriculum and instruction, geared to high State content standards and performance standards within the designated large high schools;
- (3) Providing professional development for school staff as it relates to the needs of the staff and the goals of the smaller learning communities;
- (4) Involving parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities, as facilitators of activities that promote the schools' goals, as well as to provide links between students and their community;
- (5) Obtaining the services of outside experts in the implementation of the smaller learning community. Assistance may include curriculum development, leadership strategies, community consensus building, data collection, or evaluation design; and
- (6) Providing stipends and release time for teachers, administrators, and community members involved in the implementation or expansion of the smaller learning community.

d. What priorities apply to this program?

Under 34CFR 75.105(c)(2), the Secretary gives a competitive preference to applications that request funding to support smaller learning communities in low-performing high schools that meet all other eligibility requirements for the competition.

Applicants will receive up to five additional points based on the proportion of participating schools included in the application that are identified as low-performing. These points are in addition to any points the applicant earns under the selection criteria of the program. Low-performing schools can be identified by local and State educational agencies using the criteria in Title I, Part A, section 1116(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which identifies for improvement any Title I school that has not made continuous and sustained progress over two years. In addition, for the purposes of this program, States and LEAs that have their own established criteria for identifying low-performing schools may use those criteria to provide evidence for the competitive priority. Applicants must specify the method used to identify a school(s) as low-performing.

3. Application Requirements

a. What selection criteria apply to this competition?

The Department will use four (4) criteria to evaluate applications for planning grants and five (5) criteria to evaluate applications for implementation grants. The relative weights for each criterion are indicated in parentheses. Our intent in this section is to identify the selection criteria and help applicants understand how they will be applied during the review process. A peer review panel will make a careful evaluation of applications. Each panelist will evaluate the applications against the criteria listed below. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Secretary. The Secretary will use the following selection criteria and associated point values in evaluating applications for planning and implementation grants:

- (1) The maximum score for the selection criteria is 100 points. Applicants that meet the competitive priority eligibility requirement may receive up to 105 points.
- (2) The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Within each criterion, the Secretary evaluates each factor equally.

PLANNING GRANTS

- (1) Need for the project (25 points)

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- a. The description and documentation of the targeted schools' need for the services provided and the need for the activities carried out by the proposed project consistent with the educational problems associated with the impersonal nature of large high schools. Need may consider factors such as: enrollment; attendance and drop-out rates; incidents of violence, drug and alcohol use, and disciplinary actions; percentage of students who pass graduation exams or State assessments (local assessments may be substituted in states that do not yet administer State assessments), enroll in advanced level courses, register for college entrance exams, and matriculate into postsecondary institutions or training; percentage of students who have limited English proficiency, who are migrant youth, who come from low-income families, or are otherwise disadvantaged; the applicant's fiscal capacity to fund programs described here without Federal assistance; or other local need factors as described by the applicant.
- b. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses [including the nature and magnitude of those gaps and weaknesses] in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified by the applicant and will be addressed by the proposed project.

- (2) Foundation for planning (20 points)

In determining the merit of the proposed process for developing a viable implementation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the application:

- a. Involves and documents the support of stakeholders both within the school community (e.g. administrators, staff, students, and parents) and within the greater community (e.g. representatives of institutions of higher education, employers, workforce investment boards, youth councils, and community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations)).
- b. Provides clear evidence of teacher involvement and support, particularly of those teachers who will be directly affected by the implementation plan.
- c. Indicates the collection and use of data that describe school needs.
- d. Documents the use of research-based findings in the proposed restructuring of the learning environment.

(3) Feasibility and soundness of the planning process (45 points)

In determining the feasibility and soundness of the planning process as a means of producing a viable implementation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the planned activities:

- a. Are based on a commitment to meeting the needs of all students and ensuring the successful completion of their education or career goals.
- b. Will lead to the establishment of smaller learning communities having clear goals and objectives connected to a mission statement and to student needs.
- c. Follow a timeline appropriate to the goals and objectives to be achieved.
- d. Involve key personnel who are qualified to undertake project activities.

(4) Commitment of resources to the planning effort (10 points)

In determining the commitment of resources to the planning effort, the Secretary considers the extent to which:

- a. The requested budget adequately supports the proposed activities.
- b. State, local, and other Federal funds will be used to support the development of the plan.
- c. The administrative and managerial relationship between the LEA and the smaller learning community demonstrates a commitment to the concept of a smaller learning community and the planning process.

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

(1) Need for the project (25 points)

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- a. The description and documentation of the targeted schools' need for the services provided and the need for the activities carried out by the proposed project consistent with the educational problems generally associated with the impersonal nature of large high schools. . Need may consider factors such as: enrollment; attendance and drop-out rates; incidents of violence, drug and alcohol use, and disciplinary actions; percentage of students who pass graduation exams or State assessments (local assessments may be substituted in states that do not yet administer State assessments), enroll in advanced level courses, register for college entrance exams, and matriculate into postsecondary institutions or training; percentage of

students who have limited English proficiency, who are migrant youth, who come from low-income families, or are otherwise disadvantaged; the applicant's fiscal capacity to fund programs described here without Federal assistance; or other local need factors as described by the applicant.

- b. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses [including the nature and magnitude of those gaps and weaknesses] in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified by the applicant and will be addressed by the proposed project.

(2) Foundation for implementation (15 points)

In determining the quality of the implementation plan, the Secretary considers the extent to which the application:

- a. Documents the involvement and support of stakeholders both within the school community (e.g., administrators, staff, students, and parents) and within the greater community (e.g. representatives of institutions of higher education, employers, workforce investment boards, youth councils, and community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations)).
- b. Provides clear evidence of teacher involvement and support, particularly of those teachers who will be directly affected by the implementation plan.
- c. Uses research-based findings and outside technical assistance in the proposed restructuring and in determining appropriate strategy(ies) to be implemented.

(3) Feasibility and soundness of the plan (35 points)

In determining the quality of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which:

- a. The goals and objectives of the smaller learning communities correspond to identified needs and are written in terms of student outcomes, including academic achievement.
- b. The curriculum and research-based instructional practices within each smaller learning community are aligned with its goals, theme, and emphases, where they exist.
- c. The proposed smaller learning communities intervention(s) will benefit all students in the school and enable them to reach challenging State content standards and performance standards, ensuring their successful completion of high school and preparation for postsecondary education or a career.
- d. Professional development activities offered to teachers, non-instructional school staff, and others are aligned with smaller learning community goals.
- e. The applicant provides a rationale for--
 - Identifying grade levels and ages of students to be served by the smaller learning community(ies); and
 - The methods and timetable for placing students in the smaller learning community(ies). Note: Students are not to be placed according to ability, performance, or any other measure of merit. The Department expects that all students will benefit from the SLC intervention.
- f. The management plan appears capable of achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including:
 - The past experience, training, and clearly defined responsibilities of personnel who have key roles in carrying out the project; and

- The timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(4) Quality of the project evaluation (15 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers whether the applicant has designed an effective method for:

- Collecting student performance data, including:
 - Required data for annual performance reports,
 - Baseline data (refer to ``Reporting Requirements and Expected Outcomes"), and data for three years preceding the baseline (the latter due upon award); and
 - A process for monitoring and understanding changes in student outcomes for continuous improvement.
- Describing, on an annual basis, the progress towards implementing smaller learning communities and implementing related program changes undertaken to make the smaller learning communities safe and successful. This information will be reported in the Annual Performance Report.
- Disseminating best practices and products designed under this grant.

(5) Adequacy of resources (10 points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which:

- State, local, foundation, and other Federal funds will be used to support the implementation of the plan.
- The applicant will limit equipment, administrative costs, and other purchases in order to maximize the amount spent on delivery of services to students.
- The applicant demonstrates a commitment to sustain the project beyond the period covered by the Federal grant .

b. Additional application requirements

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

For both planning and implementation grants, applicants must describe their:

- (1) Project objectives;
- (2) Measures of student outcomes and performance; and
- (3) Indicators to gauge progress toward meeting project objectives.

In addition, the Secretary requires implementation grantees to collect data that address the performance indicators for this program, in order to produce annual performance reports. These reports will document the grantee's yearly progress toward expected project objectives. The Secretary will use these reports to measure the success of the grantee's project, as well as the effects of the Department of Education's Smaller Learning Communities grant program nationwide. A copy of the Smaller Learning Communities

Annual Performance Report is included as Appendix B. Grantees may collect additional site-based data to assess the progress of their program.

Applicants must submit initial baseline data for each student outcome measure described below. Baseline data should come from either the current or previous school year. Applicants must report this data as an appendix. Upon notification of award, grantees will be required to submit student outcome data for three years preceding the baseline year.

Required student outcome measures include:

- (1) Student Achievement
 - a. The number of students scoring at each proficiency level for each subject measured by a State assessment (local assessments may be substituted in states that do not yet administer State assessments) in grades 9-12;
 - b. The number of students taking the SAT and ACT, and their average scores.
- (2) Academic Rigor and Student Retention
 - a. The number of students who take courses for which they receive both high school and college credit;
 - b. The number of students completing high school;
 - c. The overall reported average daily attendance for October.
- (3) School Climate
 - a. The number of incidents of student violence, alcohol and drug use;
 - b. The number of expulsions, suspensions, or other serious disciplinary actions; and
 - c. The number of students involved in extracurricular activities.

Note: Percentages may be used in place of number of students where appropriate.

c. What regulations apply to this program?

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99; and (b) the regulations in the Notice of Final Priorities, Application Requirements, and Selection Criteria for fiscal year 2001 as published elsewhere in the *Federal Register*.

4. Applying for the Grants

a. How to prepare an application

Carefully read the entire application package before beginning to prepare an application. The application package clearly identifies who is eligible to apply under this competition, what applicants must propose to do, what must be contained in an application, and what criteria will be used to evaluate applications. Copies of the authorizing statute as well as supplementary materials describing how to plan and manage the Smaller Learning Communities grant are provided in this application package.

A completed application must contain the following sections, in the order provided below. Copies of all forms discussed in the following section are provided in this document.

- (1) **Application for Federal Assistance.** Use ED Form 424. The first page is the standard application face page on which you provide basic identifying information about the applicant and the application. Please note that the requirement for the employer identification number has been revised. Please indicate your D-U-N-S number. If you are unfamiliar with that number or how to obtain one, instructions are included in the package. Please include the e-mail address of the contact person, if available.
- (2) **Coversheet for the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program application package.** The second page of your application consists of the SLC cover page indicating the name and address of each school included in the application.
- (3) **Budget Form.** Use the enclosed ED Form 524 (Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs) to provide a complete budget summary **for each year of the project.**
- (4) **Program Abstract.** Begin with a one-page abstract summarizing the proposed Smaller Learning Communities project, including enrollment data on each eligible high school and a short description of the population to be served by the project and a description of the project's objectives and activities.
- (5) **Table of Contents.** Include a table of contents listing the parts of the narrative in the order of the selection criteria and the page numbers where the parts of the narrative are found. Be sure to number the pages.
- (6) **Program Narrative.** Applicants are strongly encouraged to limit the application narrative to no more than 25 double-spaced, standard-type pages. Describe how the applicant meets the competitive priority, if applicable. Describe fully the proposed project in light of the selection criteria in the order in which the criteria are listed in the application package. Do not simply paraphrase the criteria.
- (7) **Budget Narrative.** Please provide a **brief** narrative that explains: (1) the basis for estimating the costs of professional personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs, and any projected expenditures; (2) how the major cost items relate to the proposed activities; (3) the cost of evaluation; and (4) a detailed description, as applicable, explaining in-kind support or funding provided by partners in the project.
- (8) **Compliance with General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427.** Include a section that describes how the program narrative (Part III) describes its compliance with GEPA's Section 427 – equitable access to and participation in federally assisted programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.
- (9) **Assurances and Certifications.** Each of the forms and assurances provided in this application package (4 total) must be completed and included in the application.
- (10) **Appendices.** Applicants must include baseline data on student outcomes for one year, as Appendix A. Applicants may also include supporting documentation as appendices to the narrative. This material should be concise and pertinent to the competition. Note that the Secretary considers only information contained in the application in ranking applications for funding consideration. Letters of support sent separately from the formal application package are not considered in the review by the peer review panels.

b. Application transmittal instructions

An application for an award may be submitted by regular mail or hand-delivered. Applications may not be faxed or sent electronically. Applications must be received or postmarked on or before the deadline for transmitting applications. No supplemental or revised information from applicants—including letters of recommendation or assurances mailed separately—will be accepted after the closing date, or after an application has been submitted. We encourage applicants to carefully review the procedures for submitting their materials. If you have questions, they should be directed to the Application Control Center at (202) 708-9493.

All applicants should submit one signed original and three additional copies of the entire application, beginning with the Cover Page (ED Form 424). Applicants should submit all copies of the application together in one package, to ensure that the Application Control Center does not log in the same application more than once. **Do not send your application, or copies of your application, to any other address within the Department of Education.**

APPLICATIONS SENT BY MAIL

Applications must be mailed to:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: CFDA 84.215L
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-4725

(Be sure to include the correct alpha and numeric description, e.g. 84.215L.)

An application must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service Postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

If the documents are sent through the U.S. Postal Service, the Secretary does not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark, or
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

An applicant should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office. An applicant is encouraged to use registered or at least first-class mail. Each late applicant will be notified that its application will not be considered.

Note: Due to irregular mail delivery in recent months, we strongly encourage applicants to use alternatives to regular mail to submit applications.

APPLICATIONS DELIVERED BY HAND/COURIER SERVICE

An application that is hand delivered must be taken to:

U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center
Regional Office Building 3, Room 3633
7th and D Streets, SW (D Street, SW, Entrance)
Washington, DC 20202-4725.

The Application Control Center will accept deliveries between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (Eastern standard time) daily, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays. Individuals delivering applications must use the D Street Entrance. Proper identification is necessary to enter the building. In order for an application sent through a Courier Service to be considered timely, the Courier Service must be in receipt of the application on or before the closing date.

All applicants submitting applications in a timely manner will receive a Grant Application Receipt Acknowledgment. If you fail to receive a notification of application receipt within thirty (30) days from the closing date, call the Application Control Center at (202) 708-9493.

c. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

Intergovernmental review applies to each program that is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

The objective of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and to strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for State and local government coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the State's process under Executive Order 12372. Applicants proposing to perform activities in more than one State should immediately contact the Single Point of Contact for each of those States and follow the procedure established in each of those States under the Executive order. A listing containing the Single Point of Contact for each State is included in this package.

In States that have not established a process or chosen a program for review, State, area wide, regional, and local entities may submit comments directly to the Department.

Any State Process Recommendation and other comments submitted by a State Single Point of Contact and any comments from State, area-wide, regional, and local entities must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in the actual application notice to the following address:

The Secretary
Re: EO 12372
U.S. Department of Education
Room 7W-100
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-0124.

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications (see 34 CFR 75.102).
Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on the date indicated in the actual application notice.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE ADDRESS IS NOT THE SAME ADDRESS AS THE ONE TO WHICH THE APPLICANT SUBMITS ITS COMPLETED APPLICATION.

DO NOT SEND APPLICATIONS TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS!

Intergovernmental Review (SPOC List)

It is estimated that in 2001 the Federal Government will outlay \$305.6 billion in grants to State and local governments. Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," was issued with the desire to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The Order allows each State to designate an entity to perform this function. Below is the official list of those entities. For those States that have a home page for their designated entity, a direct link has been provided below.

States that are not listed on this page have chosen not to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within one of these States, you may still send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency.

Contact information for Federal agencies that award grants can be found in [Appendix IV of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance](#).

<p><u>ARKANSAS</u></p> <p>Tracy L. Copeland Manager, State Clearinghouse Office of Intergovernmental Services Department of Finance and Administration 1515 W. 7th St., Room 412 Little Rock, Arkansas 72203 Telephone: (501) 682-1074 Fax: (501) 682-5206 tlcopeland@dfa.state.ar.us</p>	<p><u>CALIFORNIA</u></p> <p>Grants Coordination State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research P.O. Box 3044, Room 222 Sacramento, California 95812-3044 Telephone: (916) 445-0613 Fax: (916) 323-3018 state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov</p>
<p><u>DELAWARE</u></p> <p>Charles H. Hopkins Executive Department Office of the Budget 540 S. Dupont Highway, 3rd Floor Dover, Delaware 19901 Telephone: (302) 739-3323 Fax: (302) 739-5661 chopkins@state.de.us</p>	<p><u>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</u></p> <p>Luisa Montero-Diaz Office of Partnerships and Grants Development Executive Office of the Mayor District of Columbia Government 441 4th Street, NW, Suite 530 South Washington, DC 20001 Telephone: (202) 727-8900 Fax: (202) 727-1652 opgd.eom@dc.gov</p>
<p><u>FLORIDA</u></p> <p>Jasmin Raffington Florida State Clearinghouse Department of Community Affairs 2555 Shumard Oak Blvd. Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100 Telephone: (850) 922-5438 Fax: (850) 414-0479 clearinghouse@dca.state.fl.us</p>	<p><u>GEORGIA</u></p> <p>Georgia State Clearinghouse 270 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, Georgia 30334 Telephone: (404) 656-3855 Fax: (404) 656-7901 gach@mail.opb.state.ga.us</p>

<p><u>ILLINOIS</u></p> <p>Virginia Bova Department of Commerce and Community Affairs James R. Thompson Center 100 West Randolph, Suite 3-400 Chicago, Illinois 60601 Telephone: (312) 814-6028 Fax (312) 814-8485 vbova@commerce.state.il.us</p>	<p>IOWA</p> <p>Steven R. McCann Division of Community and Rural Development Iowa Department of Economic Development 200 East Grand Avenue Des Moines, Iowa 50309 Telephone: (515) 242-4719 Fax: (515) 242-4809 steve.mccann@ided.state.ia.us</p>
<p>KENTUCKY</p> <p>Ron Cook Department for Local Government 1024 Capital Center Drive, Suite 340 Frankfort, Kentucky 40601 Telephone: (502) 573-2382 Fax: (502) 573-2512 ron.cook@mail.state.ky.us</p>	<p>MAINE</p> <p>Joyce Benson State Planning Office 184 State Street 38 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333 Telephone: (207) 287-3261 (207) 287-1461 (direct) Fax: (207) 287-6489 joyce.benson@state.me.us</p>
<p><u>MARYLAND</u></p> <p>Linda Janey Manager, Clearinghouse and Plan Review Unit Maryland Office of Planning 301 West Preston Street - Room 1104 Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2305 Telephone: (410) 767-4490 Fax: (410) 767-4480 linda@mail.op.state.md.us</p>	<p>MICHIGAN</p> <p>Richard Pfaff Southeast Michigan Council of Governments 535 Griswold, Suite 300 Detroit, Michigan 48226 Telephone: (313) 961-4266 Fax: (313) 961-4869 pfaff@semcog.org</p>
<p>MISSISSIPPI</p> <p>Cathy Mallette Clearinghouse Officer Department of Finance and Administration 1301 Woolfolk Building, Suite E 501 North West Street Jackson, Mississippi 39201 Telephone: (601) 359-6762 Fax: (601) 359-6758</p>	<p><u>MISSOURI</u></p> <p>Angela Boessen Federal Assistance Clearinghouse Office of Administration P.O. Box 809 Truman Building, Room 840 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102 Telephone: (573) 751-4834 Fax: (573) 522-4395 igr@mail.oa.state.mo.us</p>

<p><u>NEVADA</u> Heather Elliott Department of Administration State Clearinghouse 209 E. Musser Street, Room 200 Carson City, Nevada 89701 Telephone: (775) 684-0209 Fax: (775) 684-0260 helliott@govmail.state.nv.us</p>	<p><u>NEW HAMPSHIRE</u> Jeffrey H. Taylor Director New Hampshire Office of State Planning Attn: Intergovernmental Review Process Mike Blake 2-1/2 Beacon Street Concord, New Hampshire 03301 Telephone: (603) 271-2155 Fax: (603) 271-1728 jtaylor@osp.state.nh.us</p>
<p><u>NEW MEXICO</u> Ken Hughes Local Government Division Room 201 Bataan Memorial Building Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503 Telephone: (505) 827-4370 Fax: (505) 827-4948 khughes@dfa.state.nm.us</p>	<p><u>NORTH CAROLINA</u> Jeanette Furney Department of Administration 1302 Mail Service Center Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1302 Telephone: (919) 807-2323 Fax: (919) 733-9571 jeanette.furney@ncmail.net</p>
<p><u>NORTH DAKOTA</u> Jim Boyd Division of Community Services 600 East Boulevard Ave, Dept 105 Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0170 Telephone: (701) 328-2094 Fax: (701) 328-2308 jboyd@state.nd.us</p>	<p><u>RHODE ISLAND</u> Kevin Nelson Department of Administration Statewide Planning Program One Capitol Hill Providence, Rhode Island 02908-5870 Telephone: (401) 222-2093 Fax: (401) 222-2083 knelson@doa.state.ri.us</p>
<p><u>SOUTH CAROLINA</u> Omeagia Burgess Budget and Control Board Office of State Budget 1122 Ladies Street, 12th Floor Columbia, South Carolina 29201 Telephone: (803) 734-0494 Fax: (803) 734-0645 aburgess@budget.state.sc.us</p>	<p><u>TEXAS</u> Denise S. Francis Director, State Grants Team Governor's Office of Budget and Planning P.O. Box 12428 Austin, Texas 78711 Telephone: (512) 305-9415 Fax: (512) 936-2681 dfrancis@governor.state.tx.us</p>

<p><u>UTAH</u></p> <p>Carolyn Wright Utah State Clearinghouse Governor's Office of Planning and Budget State Capitol, Room 114 Salt Lake City, Utah 84114 Telephone: (801) 538-1535 Fax: (801) 538-1547 cwright@gov.state.ut.us</p>	<p>WEST VIRGINIA</p> <p>Fred Cutlip, Director Community Development Division West Virginia Development Office Building #6, Room 553 Charleston, West Virginia 25305 Telephone: (304) 558-4010 Fax: (304) 558-3248 fcutlip@wvdo.org</p>
<p><u>WISCONSIN</u></p> <p>Jeff Smith Section Chief, Federal/State Relations Wisconsin Department of Administration 101 East Wilson Street - 6th Floor P.O. Box 7868 Madison, Wisconsin 53707 Telephone: (608) 266-0267 Fax: (608) 267-6931 jeffrey.smith@doa.state.wi.us</p>	<p>AMERICAN SAMOA</p> <p>Pat M. Galea'i Federal Grants/Programs Coordinator Office of Federal Programs Office of the Governor/Department of Commerce American Samoa Government Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799 Telephone: (684) 633-5155 Fax: (684) 633-4195 pmgaleai@samoatelco.com</p>
<p>GUAM</p> <p>Director Bureau of Budget and Management Research Office of the Governor P.O. Box 2950 Agana, Guam 96910 Telephone: 011-671-472-2285 Fax: 011-472-2825 jer@ns.gov.gu</p>	<p>PUERTO RICO</p> <p>Jose Caballero / Mayra Silva Puerto Rico Planning Board Federal Proposals Review Office Minillas Government Center P.O. Box 41119 San Juan, Puerto Rico 00940-1119 Telephone: (787) 723-6190 Fax: (787) 722-6783</p>
<p>NORTH MARIANA ISLANDS</p> <p>Ms. Jacoba T. Seman Federal Programs Coordinator Office of Management and Budget Office of the Governor Saipan, MP 96950 Telephone: (670) 664-2289 Fax: (670) 664-2272 omb.jseman@saipan.com</p>	<p>VIRGIN ISLANDS</p> <p>Ira Mills Director, Office of Management and Budget #41 Norre Gade Emancipation Garden Station, Second Floor Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802 Telephone: (340) 774-0750 Fax: (340) 776-0069 lrmills@usvi.org</p>

Changes to this list can be made only after OMB is notified by a State's officially designated representative. E-mail messages can be sent to grants@omb.eop.gov. If you prefer, you may send correspondence to the following postal address:

Attn: Grants Management
Office of Management and Budget
New Executive Office Building, Suite 6025
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Please note: Inquiries about obtaining a Federal grant should not be sent to the OMB e-mail or postal address shown above. The best source for this information is the [CFDA](#).

d. Estimated public reporting burden

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0631. Expiration date: 09/30/2004.

The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 hours (sixty hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.)

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651.

If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Robert Stonehill, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 5C-134, Washington, D.C. 20202-6200.

e. Notice: Necessity of Meeting Deadlines

IMPORTANT NOTICE

To Prospective Participants in U.S. Department of Education Contract and Grant Programs

GRANTS

Applicants for grants from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) have to compete for limited funds. Deadlines assure all applicants that they will be treated fairly and equally, without last minute haste. For these reasons, ED must set strict deadlines for grant applications. **Prospective applicants can avoid disappointment if they understand that: failure to meet a deadline will mean that an applicant will be rejected without any consideration whatever.**

The rules, including the deadline, for applying for each grant are published, individually, in the *Federal Register*. A one-year subscription to the Register may be obtained by sending \$340.00 to: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9371. (Send check or money order only, no cash or stamps.) The instructions in the *Federal Register* must be followed exactly. **Do**

not accept any other advice you may receive. No ED employee is authorized to extend any deadline published in the Register. Questions regarding submission of applications may be addressed to:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Washington, D.C. 20202-4725

CONTRACTS

Competitive procurement actions undertaken by the ED are governed by the Federal Procurement Regulation and implementing ED Procurement Regulation. Generally, prospective competitive procurement actions are synopsized in the Commerce Business Daily (CBD). Prospective offerors are therein advised of the nature of the procurement and where to apply for copies of the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Offerors are advised to be guided solely by the contents of the CBD synopsis and the instructions contained in the RFP. Questions regarding the submission of offers should be addressed to the Contracts Specialist identified on the face page of the RFP. Offers are judged in competition with others, and failure to conform with any substantive requirements of the RFP will result in rejection of the offer without any consideration whatever.

Do not accept any advice you receive that is contrary to instructions contained in either the CBD synopsis or the RFP. No ED employee is authorized to consider a proposal which is non-responsive to the RFP.

A subscription to the CBD is available for \$208.00 per year via second class mailing or \$261.00 per year via first class mailing. Information included in the Federal Acquisition Regulation is contained in Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1 (\$49.00). The foregoing publication may be obtained by sending your check or money order only, no cash or stamps, to:

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402-9371

In an effort to be certain this important information is widely disseminated, this notice is being included in all ED mail to the public. You may therefore, receive more than one notice. If you do, we apologize for any annoyance it may cause you.

5. Non-regulatory Guidance

PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines contain information primarily on:

- The purpose of the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program,
- The local educational agency application process,
- How schools can use the program to create smaller, personalized learning communities and improve student achievement.

The guidance in this document applies to Smaller Learning Communities programs, authorized by section 10105 of Part A of Title X of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 8005).¹ Certain specific requirements explicated in this guidance are taken from the statute or the applicable *Federal Register* Notices (the Notices for the competition for Fiscal Year 2001 funds were published at 66 Fed. Reg. 65570). All such requirements remain binding on grantees. These guidelines impose no additional requirements.

While LEAs may consider the guidance in this document in developing their own guidelines and standards, they are free to develop alternative approaches that are consistent with the Smaller Learning Communities statute (20 U.S.C. 8005) and the applicable *Federal Register* Notices. However, compliance with the guidance in this document shall be deemed compliance with the relevant statutory requirements by Department of Education officials.

Looking at the SLC program

a. What is the purpose of the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program?

The Smaller Learning Communities program supports the development of small, safe and successful learning environments in large high schools. The goal is to ensure that all students graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to make successful transitions to college and careers.

This program provides competitive grants to local educational agencies (LEAs), or to schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), to develop, implement, or expand smaller learning communities in their large high schools. The Department expects these strategies to:

- improve student achievement;
- increase the number of students mastering State content and performance standards;
- improve student attendance rates, graduation rates, and college enrollment rates;
- reduce the frequency of disciplinary actions; and
- create a safe, drug-free learning environment.

¹ A similar provision that will authorize grants for Smaller Learning Communities programs is contained in H.R. 1 (“No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”), which was recently passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

b. What other Department programs can be used to support high school improvement?

The Department has a number of programs designed to assist schools with other components of comprehensive reform. Among other things, Department programs can help high schools prepare students to meet challenging academic standards, train teachers in technology, expose students to the world of work, provide students with after-school activities and focus on local school improvement goals. Federal programs that can support some, or all, of these reform efforts include:

- Advanced Placement Programs
- Vocational and Technical Education
- Comprehensive School Reform
- GEAR UP
- Safe and Drug-Free Schools
- Educational Technology State Grants
- Title I (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged)
- Innovative Programs State Grants
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Pursuant to the statutory application requirements, applications will describe how the applicant will coordinate or use funds provided under this part with other funds provided under this chapter or other Federal laws.

Eligibility

c. Who is eligible to apply for an SLC grant?

Large public high schools are the intended beneficiaries of the SLC program. Thus, LEAs may apply on behalf of their large high schools. Large high schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA schools) also may apply. Schools that are under construction, do not have an active student enrollment at the time of application, or that will open during the grant period are not eligible.

d. How is “large” high school defined?

The Department has defined a large high school as one that: (a) includes grades 11 and 12; and (b) enrolls at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above.

e. Who may submit the SLC grant application?

An LEA submits grant applications on behalf of one or more eligible high schools. An LEA may submit an application on behalf of:

- one eligible high school in its district,
- a group of eligible high schools that includes no more than ten schools, or

- a group of two to ten LEAs, on behalf of up to ten eligible high schools.

If an LEA applies on behalf of more than one school in a single application, each high school in the application must meet the eligibility requirements of this program.

If an LEA submits more than one application, (there is no limit on the number of applications that one LEA may submit), it cannot include any school in more than one application. See question “s” for more information on funding limits.

f. What is an “LEA?”

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title XIV, Part A, defines “local educational agency” in pertinent part, as a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision. An LEA may be in a city, county, township, school district, or some other political subdivision of a State. An LEA may also be a combination of school districts that are recognized in a State for administering public elementary or secondary schools.

For the full definition of “LEA,” see 20 U.S.C. 8801 (18).

g. May public and private entities other than LEAs participate in this program?

The LEA, as the grantee, is the only authorized fiscal agent. However, applicants may form partnerships with other public or private agencies to plan or implement grant activities. Applicants must document the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders that will be involved in the planning or implementation of grant activities.

h. Who can serve as the fiscal agent for the grant?

Only the LEA may serve as the fiscal agent for the grant.

i. Is an intermediate unit (e.g., a county office of education) eligible to apply for a grant?

Yes, if the intermediate unit has the characteristics of an LEA (please refer to question “f”).

j. Can charter schools apply?

Yes. Charter schools are generally either LEAs or public schools within an LEA. Charter schools that are both LEAs and meet the definition of a large high school may apply directly. Charter schools that are not LEAs but meet the definition of a large high school may not apply directly, but may be the subject of an LEA’s application.

k. Can private schools apply?

No. Under the statute authorizing smaller learning communities, only LEAs are eligible to apply for this grant. There is no provision in the legislation for providing services to private school students. However, the Department encourages LEAs to share their knowledge of effective smaller learning communities with private school officials.

l. Can a school propose to use SLC funds to create a single academy even though it cannot serve all students?

Nothing in the legislation precludes an applicant from developing a plan for a smaller learning community that includes only part of its total student population. However, in the “feasibility and soundness of the plan” selection criterion, it is stated that the Secretary will consider the extent to which “...the proposed smaller learning communities intervention(s) will benefit all students in the school...” The intent of the legislation is to restructure schools in order to raise student achievement for all high school students.

m. If a school has more than 1,000 students but is housed in two separate campuses, can an LEA apply on its behalf?

Yes. An LEA may apply on behalf of such a school if the district recognizes it as one high school and it meets the other eligibility criteria.

n. What is the "Secretary's Competitive Priority"?

Under a competitive preference priority, the Department gives competitive preference to an application by awarding additional points, depending on how well the application meets the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)).

Under the competition for FY 2001 funds, the Secretary's competitive priority calls for LEAs to submit applications on behalf of low-performing schools. Applicants are able to receive up to five additional points based on the proportion of schools in the application that are identified as low-performing. In order to receive additional points, LEAs must demonstrate the low-performing status of the school(s) included in the application and how they determined the low-performing status of the school(s).

o. How do I identify a low-performing school?

Local and State educational agencies may identify schools as low-performing, using the criteria in Title I, Part A, section 1116(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which identifies for improvement any Title I school that has not made continuous and sustained progress over two years. In addition, SEAs and LEAs that have their own criteria for identifying low-performing schools may use those criteria to provide evidence for the competitive priority. The LEA must specify which method was used to determine the low-performing status of their school(s).

Types of Grants to be Awarded

p. What are the types of grants that will be awarded?

Under the SLC program, the Department will award both one-year planning and three-year implementation grants. LEAs may submit multiple applications targeting separate schools within each of the two funding categories. However, an LEA may not apply on behalf of the same eligible high school in more than one application.

q. How do the purposes of each type of grant differ?

The purpose of a planning grant is to assist grantees in the creation of smaller, more personalized learning environments. The Department expects the planning and development activities described in the applicant's planning grant proposal to result in a viable implementation plan.

The basic purpose of an implementation grant is to provide large high schools the means either to implement an already crafted implementation plan or expand an already existing SLC program.

r. What are their respective awards ranges?

For a planning grant, an LEA may receive, on behalf of a single school, \$25,000 to \$50,000 per project. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may receive funds up to \$250,000 per planning grant. Districts must abide by the minimum and maximum school allocations when determining their group award request. Under this requirement, LEAs may not request funds for more than 10 schools under a single application.

For an implementation grant, an LEA may receive, on behalf of a single school, \$250,000 to \$500,000 per project. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may receive funds up to \$2,500,000 per implementation grant. Districts must abide by the minimum and maximum school allocations when determining their group award request. Under this requirement, LEAs may not request funds for more than 10 schools under a group application.

s. Is there any limit on the amount of funding that an LEA can receive over the life of the program?

No, there is no limit on the amount of funding that an LEA can receive over the life of the program. However, as stated in the Notice in the *Federal Register*, the SLC program limits the amount of funding that an LEA may receive, in a given fiscal year, to \$5 million.

Planning Grants

t. What must each planning grant application describe?

As set out in the *Federal Register* Notices and application package for this program, SLC grant applicants must include all required application content as set out in the program statute under 10105 (a) of the ESEA. In an application for a planning grant, the applicant must describe the planning and development activities it intends to pursue in order to create a viable plan for implementing smaller learning communities. An “implementation plan” is a blueprint for establishing smaller learning communities within an existing school.

In describing how it will go about creating an implementation plan, the applicant should be sure to cover these points: (a) the school and student needs as determined through a comprehensive needs assessment at each school site, (b) steps that will be taken to select appropriate SLC structures and complementary strategies that meet the school and student needs, (c) steps that will be taken to formulate a plan of action for creating the implementation plan, (d) resources that will be committed to the planning process and (e) evidence of involvement by key stakeholders.

u. What kinds of planning activities can SLC grants support?

The *Federal Register* Notice and application package provide examples of the kinds of activities for which planning grantees will be able to use SLC grant funds. The Department expects planning grantees to develop a viable implementation plan during the period of their grant. Examples of activities that may be conducted with a planning grant include:

- conducting a needs assessment at each school site to determine the academic needs of students and the required skills and resources for addressing those needs,
- studying the opportunities for restructuring a large school as a set of smaller learning communities,
- investigating instructional and school-wide strategies that are appropriate for smaller learning communities;
- building consensus among key stakeholders,
- assessing staff training and development needs relative to the needs assessment,
- analyzing administrative support for the creation of the smaller learning environment, and
- developing strategies to include parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities.

v. Will LEAs that are awarded planning grants receive any competitive preference in future competitions for implementation grants?

There is no statutory authority that gives preference to planning grantees. However, planning grantees may have a competitive advantage in that they have received resources to create a viable implementation plan. Thus, applying for an implementation grant will be a natural progression in creating smaller learning communities.

Implementation Grants

w. What must each implementation grant application describe?

As set out in the *Federal Register* Notice and application package for this program, SLC grant applicants must include all required application content as set out in the program statute under 10105 (a) of the ESEA. To apply for implementation funds, an applicant must be prepared either to implement a new smaller learning community program within each targeted high school, or to expand an existing smaller learning community program. Thus, applications for an implementation grant must include a viable implementation plan.

An implementation grant application will describe each school's need for smaller learning communities. It will include a viable implementation plan addressing, at a minimum, each of these points: (a) the structures that the school community has agreed to implement or expand, (b) the steps that were taken to select a program that will meet each school's needs, (c) how the program will work, including the alignment of the goals of the smaller learning communities with the needs of the school, especially as related to staff development, (d) the resources each school and school district will commit, (e) the system for monitoring the progress of the program, and (f) the administrative and managerial relationships among SLCs, the larger school community, and the LEA.

When preparing an implementation grant application, the applicant must include a discussion of how students will be assigned to smaller learning communities, noting that the section within ESEA authorizing the SLC program requires assignment to be random or reflect student choice.

x. What kinds of implementation activities can SLC grants support?

The *Federal Register* Notice and application package provide examples of the kinds of activities for which implementation grantees will be able to use SLC grant funds. The Department expects implementation grantees to restructure their large high schools into smaller learning communities. Examples of activities that may be conducted under an implementation grant include:

- implementing and expanding the structures of the smaller learning communities within the designated large high schools,
- implementing and expanding complementary personalization strategies within the designated large high schools,
- providing professional development for school staff as it relates to the needs of the staff and the goals of the smaller learning communities,
- involving parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities,
- obtaining the services of outside experts, and
- providing stipends and release time for teachers, administrators, and community members involved in the implementation or expansion of the smaller learning community.

Distribution and Use of Funds

y. What are the authorized activities for which Smaller Learning Communities funds may be used?

According to Section 10105(b) of ESEA, funds from the Smaller Learning Communities program may be used:

- a. to study the feasibility of creating the smaller learning community or communities as well as effective and innovative organizational and instructional strategies that will be used in the smaller learning community or communities;
- b. to research, develop and implement strategies for creating the smaller learning community or communities, as well as effective and innovative changes in curriculum and instruction, geared to high State content standards and State student performance standards;
- c. to provide professional development for school staff in innovative teaching methods that challenge and engage students to be used in the smaller learning community or communities; and
- d. to develop and implement strategies to include parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities, as facilitators of activities that enable teachers to participate in professional development activities, as well as to provide links between students and their community.

In order to perform the planned activities noted in items (a)-(d), applicants should refer to questions “u” and “x” for examples of allowable planning and implementation activities.

z. How should an LEA distribute funds to the school(s) on whose behalf it submitted an SLC grant application?

The Department fully expects the large majority of the funds to be expended at the “school building level,” covering the activities, services and purchases identified in the application as occurring at the school-level.

aa. How long are the grant funds available to the LEAs?

Planning grants will fund activities for up to 12 months. Implementation grants will fund activities for up to 36 months.

bb. Will funds become available at once or will they be awarded annually for the duration of the performance period?

All grant funds for the Smaller Learning Communities program will be available at the time of the grant award. Although funds will be available at that time, grantees still must meet all requirements pertaining to obligation and expenditure of funds throughout the grant period. For implementation grantees, uninterrupted access to funds will depend upon a grantee's close adherence to its yearly

budget projections as well as submission of an annual performance report, showing adequate progress, during the three-year period of the grant.

cc. Since funding is available for a three-year period, are there any limits on when the money can be spent?

The Department requires applicants to submit a detailed yearly budget as part of a complete application. Through GAPS, the Department of Education's Grants and Payments System, the Department will monitor grantees' spending activities. Grantees whose spending diverges from the plan outlined in their application will be required to explain any discrepancies and risk losing funds as will grantees that are not in compliance with GAPS regulations for drawing down and spending money.

dd. What percentage of total grant funds may an LEA set aside to cover its administrative costs?

The legislation for the Smaller Learning Communities program does not establish a specific percentage that can be set aside to cover administrative costs. However, in keeping with the applicable cost principles, any set-aside must be "necessary and reasonable" for the proper and efficient administration of the SLC program.

ee. May SLC funds be used to construct or purchase new facilities?

Funds may not be used to construct or purchase facilities (34 CFR 75.553).

Grant funds may be used to:

- complete minor renovations (although grantees will need prior approval from the Department's SLC program office),
- rent new facilities, and
- purchase equipment on a limited basis (see question "ff" for more information on limited equipment expenditures).

ff. Grant funds can be used to cover "limited equipment" expenditures. What is the definition of "limited purchases?"

Although the Department has not specified an amount or percentage cap on equipment acquisitions with grant funds, applicants should be aware that grants awarded under this program are not to support large purchases of equipment--see the application guidelines. Under the "Adequacy of Resources" selection criterion, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant will limit equipment costs in order to maximize the amount spent on delivery of services to students. Consequently, applications proposing equipment purchases as their primary purpose will probably not be competitive in that criterion. In addition, applicants should not propose spending plans for scheduled replacements or upgrades of equipment. Applicants may make modest equipment acquisitions with grant funds that enable them to establish a core infrastructure that can be used to

seek additional and larger levels of equipment support from consortium members or from corporate donors or foundation sponsors.

gg. Can SLC funds be used to purchase computers?

The legislation does not prohibit purchase of computers. The Department encourages applicants, however, to limit hardware costs because the intent of the program is to create smaller, personalized learning environments for students. The Department encourages applicants to look to other funding sources to support technology needs.

hh. Can SLC funds be used to hire teachers?

The SLC program is designed to help large high schools create smaller, more personalized communities. The Department anticipates that many schools will find that their staffing needs change as they create smaller learning communities. Nevertheless, the Department encourages schools to avoid relying on temporary SLC funds to meet staffing needs.

Implementation grant applications must demonstrate the ability to sustain proposed SLCs at the end of the grant period. LEAs relying on SLC funds to pay teacher salaries seem unlikely to meet this goal.

ii. May a grantee use SLC funds to reimburse a proposal-writing firm or a consultant for developing an application?

No. A grantee may not use SLC grant funds to cover the cost of proposal development. SLC funds may only be used for costs that are necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient performance and administration of the SLC program.

jj. If a grantee had already begun plans for developing or implementing small school structures, may SLC funds be used to reimburse the grantee for costs that were incurred prior to the date it was notified that it would receive SLC funds?

No. SLC funds may only be used to fund activities that take place after the grant funds are received.

kk. How does the Department expect grantees to continue implementing smaller learning communities once SLC funds have expired?

The Department recognizes that there are costs associated with restructuring schools into smaller learning communities. Therefore, Smaller Learning Communities funds are start-up funds that allow schools to plan, implement, or expand smaller learning communities. Schools are required to determine how they will sustain smaller learning communities beyond the life of their grants. The Department expects that schools will use local, State, and other Federal funds to support smaller learning communities during and after the project period of this grant.

In accordance with the Notice in the *Federal Register*, schools that have received implementation funds through the SLC program are not eligible to apply for funds under subsequent SLC competitions.

Data Collection

ll. What types of evaluation activities will be expected of grantees?

Grantees are not required to conduct an independent evaluation of their projects. The three most important data collection activities required by the Department of Education of implementation grantees will be (a) collecting student data to compile annual performance reports, (b) describing ongoing program implementation, and (c) collecting three years of baseline data for the program evaluation.

Annual performance reports will require grantees to produce numbers for several data elements that the Department believes are already contained in most data systems, and that are key for monitoring continuous improvement. Even so, some grantees will have to update existing student data systems so that they support a system of continuous improvement and provide the information needed for annual reports.

mm. What types of data will grantees be required to collect and submit annually?

Grantees will submit an annual program performance report with the number of students:

- scoring at each proficiency level for each subject measured by the State assessment (district assessments may substitute where state assessments are not yet available),
- taking the SAT and ACT (and their average scores),
- taking courses for which they receive both high school and college credit,
- involved in extracurricular activities, and
- completing high school.

It will also report the:

- number of incidents of student violence,
- number of expulsions, suspensions, or other disciplinary actions,
- number of reported incidents of student alcohol or drug use, and
- overall average daily attendance for October.

6. Supporting Documents

a. Federal Legislation: ESEA, Title X, Part A

SEC. 10105. Smaller Learning Communities

(a) In General--Each local educational agency desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require. Each such application shall describe--

- (1) strategies and methods the applicant will use to create the smaller learning community or communities;
- (2) curriculum and instructional practices, including any particular themes or emphases, to be used in the learning environment;
- (3) the extent of involvement of teachers and other school personnel in investigating, designing, implementing and sustaining the smaller learning community or communities;
- (4) the process to be used for involving students, parents and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of the smaller learning community or communities;
- (5) any cooperation or collaboration among community agencies, organizations, businesses, and others to develop or implement a plan to create the smaller learning community or communities;
- (6) the training and professional development activities that will be offered to teachers and others involved in the activities assisted under this part;
- (7) the goals and objectives of the activities assisted under this part, including a description of how such activities will better enable all students to reach challenging State content standards and State student performance standards;
- (8) the methods by which the applicant will assess progress in meeting such goals and objectives;
- (9) if the smaller learning community or communities exist as a school-within-a-school, the relationship, including governance and administration, of the smaller learning community to the rest of the school;
- (10) a description of the administrative and managerial relationship between the local educational agency and the smaller learning community or communities, including how such agency will demonstrate a commitment to the continuity of the smaller learning community or communities, including the continuity of student and teacher assignment to a particular learning community;
- (11) how the applicant will coordinate or use funds provided under this part with other funds provided under this Act or other Federal laws;
- (12) grade levels or ages of students who will participate in the smaller learning community or communities; and

(13) the method of placing students in the smaller learning community or communities, such that students are not placed according to ability, performance or any other measure, so that students are placed at random or by their own choice, not pursuant to testing or other judgments.

(b) Authorized Activities.--Funds under this section may be used--

(1) to study the feasibility of creating the smaller learning community or communities as well as effective and innovative organizational and instructional strategies that will be used in the smaller learning community or communities;

(2) to research, develop and implement strategies for creating the smaller learning community or communities, as well as effective and innovative changes in curriculum and instruction, geared to high State content standards and State student performance standards;

(3) to provide professional development for school staff in innovative teaching methods that challenge and engage students to be used in the smaller learning community or communities; and

(4) to develop and implement strategies to include parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, and other community members in the smaller learning communities, as facilitators of activities that enable teachers to participate in professional development activities, as well as to provide links between students and their community.

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An Overview of Smaller Learning Communities in High Schools



U.S. Department of Education

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education

2001

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U.S. Department of Education
Rod Paige
Secretary

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Susan B. Neuman
Assistant Secretary

Office of Vocational and Adult Education
Carol D'Amico
Assistant Secretary

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I. Introduction

A persistent call for more effective schools echoes across the nation—from students and their families, from education reformers and researchers, from governors, state legislators, and the U.S. Congress. While many reform strategies have surfaced in our nation's schools, research to date has validated relatively few of them. One reform that continues to accumulate supporting research is the creation of smaller, more personalized high schools. Research and experience show that smaller learning communities can improve academic achievement for most students by contributing to a safer, more humane environment and a more positive overall educational experience.²

Research findings support the notion that high school students are more successful when they attend small schools. Small school environments positively affect student achievement with noted improvements in grades, test scores, attendance rates, graduation rates, drug and alcohol use, and school safety (Klonsky, 1998). There is also evidence that large high schools that have been restructured into smaller learning communities yield similar benefits, especially when the sub-school units are separate and distinct (Cotton, 2000).

Making high schools smaller is not a panacea for secondary education, but smaller, more personalized learning structures provide fertile soil for other high school improvement strategies to take root and succeed. Because change is easier to implement in a smaller setting, smaller learning environments create a context hospitable to reform. As Wood (1992) documented in *Schools That Work*, making schools smaller is the first step toward enhancing school conditions and improving student outcomes.

To help large districts and schools personalize the high school experience, the U.S. Congress has again appropriated funding for the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program. This program supports strategies that result in smaller, safer learning environments at the high school level. In FY 2001, the U.S. Department of Education will award up to \$125 million in competitive grants to help local education agencies (LEAs) create smaller, more supportive learning communities as a foundation for their broader school improvement strategies.

This background paper is designed to help policymakers and school leaders use the new Smaller Learning Communities program to implement small school strategies in large high schools and within school districts. The paper describes the federal initiative, highlights small school structures and strategies that may be implemented with grant funds, reviews the context of the growing consensus around smaller schools, and summarizes the research that undergirds the new grant program.

II. Personalizing the High School Experience: A Federal Initiative

What's wrong with high school? ... Too many high schools are overly large and impersonal; their schedules are too regimented, adults are too busy to get to know students; athletics are

² Although there is no consensus on the dividing line between small and large schools, most researchers suggest that a size of 400 to 800 students is the appropriate range for a high school, and many prefer schools no larger than 400 or 500 (Cotton, 1996). Those researchers who use the lower enrollment range to define small schools tend to value small size because of its impact on the school as a community, while those whose work emphasizes small schools' impact on academic effectiveness as measured by test scores tend to accept a relatively higher upper limit for small schools (Raywid, 1999). In *Breaking Ranks*, the National Association of Secondary School Principals called for self-operating units of no more than 600 students (NASSP, 1996).

more valued than academics. All too often, critics say, high school is a place that stifles creativity while fostering competition, conformity, intolerance, and mean-spiritedness.

Lawrence Hardy, *The American School Board Journal*.

To help large high schools and school districts make schools smaller, Congress earmarked \$45 million in the FY 2000 Appropriations Act for the Department of Education to fund Section 10105 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This section of the act, entitled the Smaller Learning Communities program, was designed to help LEAs plan, develop, implement, or expand smaller, more personalized learning communities in large high schools. Of the \$45 million appropriated for the SLC program, the Department awarded \$42.3 million in support of 149 grants to LEAs. The Secretary awarded 84 one-year planning grants and 65 three-year implementation grants. A total of 349 schools, serving more than 450,000 students, benefited during the first year of the program. The secretary reserved the remaining \$2,250,000 to fund national leadership activities.

Using additional funds appropriated in FY 2001 for school year 2001-2002, the Department will award up to \$125 million to LEAs under this program. These funds will assist up to 200 school districts across the country to implement their restructuring and personalization plans.

The Smaller Learning Communities program is an opportunity for high schools to receive assistance in their efforts to raise academic achievement. By supporting smaller communities within large schools, the program sets the stage for students achieving to higher standards as it helps students stay in school and participate more fully in the school community. Additionally, in the wake of highly publicized school violence, the program can help LEAs personalize the high school experience by strengthening interpersonal relationships between students and staff. Finally, as states and LEAs implement comprehensive school reform, smaller learning communities are one way to keep student achievement at the center of those reform initiatives.

Use of Funds

The Smaller Learning Communities program can help LEAs and schools shoulder the initial costs associated with personalizing schools and scaling them down. Funds may be used only for activities related to the implementation of a plan to establish smaller learning communities in high schools. These may include activities designed to commence implementation activities, reorganize schools, train teachers, build partnerships, acquire technical assistance, build data collection and evaluation systems, and provide extended learning time and support services for students.

Research demonstrates that smaller settings make it easier to implement other reforms and increase their effect. Smaller Learning Communities grants can be combined effectively with other high school reform initiatives. For example, the Department's Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program provides funds through states and LEAs for schoolwide improvements that support achievement of high academic standards, an outcome that some research correlates with smaller schools. Smaller Learning Communities grants can support extended learning time—an obvious link to the 21st-Century Community Learning Center grant program for school-community partnerships that keep schools open after school and during school breaks. Teacher Quality Enhancement grants, designed to increase student achievement by improving teacher quality, can help prepare teachers to build personal relationships with students through mentoring and advisory groups or prepare them to teach in alternatively configured schedules.

Funds may not be used for new construction of schools, and equipment purchases should be limited.

Grant-funded efforts to create smaller learning environments must be connected to a comprehensive plan to improve student achievement for all students enrolled in the school.

Grant Applications

Districts may apply on behalf of one or more of their large high schools or for a district-wide initiative to plan, implement, or expand a common approach across all of their large high schools. For the purposes of this competition, a “large high school” is defined as a school that enrolls 1,000 or more students in grades nine through twelve; schools must already be in existence and must contain grades 11 and 12. Grants will be awarded for school-specific restructuring activities such as academies, house plans, schools-within-schools, and magnet programs or to implement personalization strategies such as alternative scheduling, teacher advisory systems, or adult mentoring programs in large high schools.

For a one-year planning grant, LEAs may request \$25,000 to \$50,000 on behalf of a single school. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may request up to \$250,000 per planning grant. For a three-year implementation grant, LEAs may request \$250,000 to \$500,000 on behalf of a single school. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may request up to \$2,500,000 per implementation grant. The maximum combined award amount for any district is \$5,000,000.

The Department anticipates publishing an application package in November 2001. It will be available online at: www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SLCP. Applications for funding must be received within 60 days of the date of publication of a Notice Inviting Applications in the *Federal Register*. The Department anticipates awarding grants by April 2002. For further information about the grant or to learn more about the Smaller Learning Communities program, visit the Department’s SLC Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SLCP> or e-mail the Smaller Learning Communities staff at: smallerlearningcommunities@ed.gov.

III. Implementation Structures and Strategies

...[R]esearch has consistently shown that when a school is too big, serious problems often arise. Smaller schools tend to have lower dropout rates, better attendance, fewer incidents of violence, and more student participation in extracurricular activities. Discipline problems can be more serious when students see themselves as being relatively anonymous.... As for academic achievement, the research suggests that at-risk students are at a particular disadvantage in overly large schools.

*American Federation of Teachers, Improving Low-Performing High Schools:
Ideas and Promising Programs for High Schools.*

In a small school, every student has the opportunity to develop personal relationships with small groups of peers and teachers. When appropriate structures and strategies are in place, even students in large buildings and large school districts can gain the advantages of a small school.

This section identifies structures and strategies that local education agencies and school administrators should consider, whether or not they are applying for Smaller Learning Communities grant funds. Local education agencies and individual schools can use these strategies, often in combination, to create a small school feeling within a larger one.

Smaller Learning Community Structures

...[T]here is much more to the whole matter of scale. It is not only that each teacher must have a sensible load of students. It is that the school itself has to be of human scale—a place where everyone can know everyone else.

Ted Sizer, *Horace's Hope*.

Small schools can be defined numerically, though experts disagree on the exact upper limit for a small high school. Smaller school *structures* have a number of categories. Effective restructuring initiatives generally use multiple strategies to gain the full benefits of a small learning environment. Models have been identified, based on the degree of autonomy from the larger school in which they are located. Examples of smaller school structures include academies, house plans, schools-within-schools, and magnet schools.

Combining several smaller school reforms with each other, as well as with other comprehensive reforms, is more beneficial than implementing one smaller school strategy in isolation. Small school structures, implemented along with other complementary strategies that enhance student learning, are most likely to succeed.

Structure I: Academies are subgroups within schools, organized around particular themes. For example, career academies combine key principles of the school-to-career movement—integrating academic and vocational instruction, providing work-based learning opportunities for students, and preparing students for postsecondary education and employment—with the personalized learning environment of a small, focused learning community. Teachers and students integrate academic and occupation-related classes as a way to enhance real-world relevance and maintain high academic standards. Local employer partnerships provide program planning guidance, mentors, and work internships. Career academies share with other restructuring initiatives an emphasis on building relationships between students and adults (teachers as well as work-site supervisors and other employer representatives).

Structure II: House plans divide students in a large school into groups of several hundred, either across grade levels or by grade levels. Students take some or all courses with their house members and from their house teachers. House arrangements may be yearlong or multiyear arrangements. House plans personalize the high school experience but usually have limited effect on curriculum or instruction. Each house usually has its own discipline plan, student government, social activities, and other extracurricular activities, although students may also participate in activities of the larger school. Grouping ninth-graders into a separate house is one way to ease freshman transition to high school.

Structure III: A school-within-a-school is a small, autonomous program housed within a larger school building. Schools-within-schools are generally responsible to the district rather than to the host school's principal, and are formally authorized by the superintendent or board of education. Schools-within-schools have their own culture, program, personnel, students, budget, and school space (negotiating the use of common space with the host school in the same way office building tenants arrange for use of shared conference facilities). Like an academy, the school-within-a-school structure supports constructive relationships between and among students and teachers by grouping students together each year to take core courses with the same group of teachers, thus increasing the supports students receive from peers, teachers, and other adults.

Structure IV: Magnet programs use a specialty core focus (such as math, science, creative arts, or a career theme or cluster) to attract students from the entire school district. Some magnet programs have

competitive admission requirements; others are open to any interested student. Students in a magnet program stay together for their core classes and may take other courses with non-magnet students.

Smaller Learning Community Strategies

Human scale is only the beginning. The culture of the place is also critical, [reflecting] the dignity deserved by teachers as well as students.

Ted Sizer, *Horace's Hope*.

Specific strategies that take advantage of a restructured school can be implemented at the sub-school unit level, within an entire building, or districtwide. Most of these strategies have the advantage of making students feel more connected to each other, to adults, and to their school group. Strategies that are particularly effective in making schools feel smaller are best implemented in conjunction with one of the structural approaches.

Strategy I: Freshman transition activities help ease the difficulties students often encounter as they move from middle to high school. Some schools place all first-year students in their own academy or house setting, sometimes in a separate wing or even a separate building, with extra support from adults. In other cases, freshman transition includes mentoring from older students or special career exploration classes designed to set the context for high school as a pathway to college and careers.

Strategy II: Multiyear groups, in which several teachers stay with a group of students over a period of two or more years, foster trust and intimacy between students and teachers. This strategy is similar to “looping,” a strategy used in elementary or middle schools when groups of students stay together with a teacher for more than one year. A multiyear group is a strategy for keeping several teachers with a group of students for a set period of time.

Strategy III: Alternative scheduling allows teachers to develop lessons that are more compatible with learning objectives. Alternative scheduling is also conducive to arranging for work-based learning opportunities and integrating business and community volunteers into the curriculum. The length of the class period, the school day, and the school year can be changed to support academic achievement. This is most easily done in smaller schools. One of the more common alternatives, “block scheduling,” provides extended class periods that provide teachers with the time necessary for in-depth lessons and experiential learning. These arrangements permit more time for tutoring and intensive projects, allow enrichment activities, and afford time to lagging students to catch up and advanced students to delve into topics more deeply. They give schools the ability to set a schedule that best suits their needs.

Strategy IV: Adult advocate systems ensure that at least one adult knows each student well. One quarter of students report being concerned that they and their friends lack an adult who talks with them about problems and decisions (*Shell Poll*, Summer 1999). Teachers, counselors, community volunteers, and other school staff can fulfill this “caring adult” role, helping personalize students’ experiences in even the largest schools. By meeting with 15 to 20 students, individually or in small groups, on a regular basis over several years, adult advocates can provide rapport, academic and personal guidance, and links to additional resources when needed. Training for adult advocates and administrative support for the advocate system are critical elements for success.

Strategy V: Teacher advisory systems are similar to adult advocate systems; they organize adults to personalize the high school experience and support academic achievement, working with small groups of

students. Some schools and districts establish advisory classes that meet weekly; others schedule students for less formal one-on-one or group time with teachers. Advisory activities may include helping students develop personal learning plans, introducing students to career clusters, helping students select courses, and working with students on postsecondary plans and preemployment skills.

Strategy VI: Academic teaming organizes groups of teachers across departments, so that teachers share the same students rather than the same subject. This strategy has much the same effect as a house structure. Teaming links teachers, who teach different subjects, in a team that shares responsibility for the curriculum, instruction, evaluation, and sometimes scheduling and discipline of a group of 100 to 150 students. Teams share the same planning time and sometimes share a specific area of the school building. Though more commonly used in middle schools, academic teaming is showing up in restructuring high schools as a way to personalize the learning environment by providing an integrated view of students' progress and creating a group of teachers who can focus together on the whole student. Teams can build a sense of community into the school, enabling students to learn more so they can meet higher standards (George and McEwin, April 1999; Legters, January 1999).

IV. The Roots of Today's Smaller Learning Communities

Given the one-size-fits-all aspect of the American school system, large, impersonal schools made administrative sense, even if the educational benefits were hard to find.... But a system of schools dedicated to meeting as many diverse needs as possible almost demands that school boards encourage the establishment of much smaller and more humane environments.

David T. Kearns and James Harvey, *A Legacy of Learning*.

The 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk* catapulted American education into an era of reform that continues today. *A Nation at Risk's* alarm gave rise to the push to improve student achievement through standards-based education, rigorous and challenging curriculum, business partnerships for school-to-work initiatives, and more. In response, some schools and districts began experimenting with ways to make the high school experience seem smaller and more personalized as a way to boost student achievement.

Studies since then have demonstrated the positive impacts of smaller schools on student achievement. A growing body of research suggests similar benefits may also be derived from school structures and strategies that create the same conditions as small schools. Those research findings have motivated the growth of smaller schools and the creation of smaller learning communities within large, existing high schools.

During the past several decades, small school reform initiatives that have proven effective include New York City's Small Schools Network, the Small Schools Workshop based at the University of Illinois in Chicago, and the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES). Small size is a definitional concept for the first two networks, and is at the heart of the Coalition of Essential Schools, as demonstrated in one of that network's eight operational principles: "Since they have direct bearing on intellectual, interpersonal and organizational processes, CES work at all levels should be of a size and scale to allow for personalization," (www.essentialschools.org). Many more reform efforts have embraced this concept of creating small learning environments within larger schools, including California's career academies, the multistate charter schools movement, and urban reform efforts in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other cities (U.S. Department of Education, March 1999).

In their 1996 report, *Breaking Ranks*, the National Association of Secondary School Principals encouraged high schools to create self-operating units of no more than 600 students to reduce student feelings of anonymity. Although class size does not necessarily correspond to school size, *Breaking Ranks* warned that the average teacher sees far too many students each term to get to know each of them well. Some high school teachers see more than 150 students in their classrooms each day and teach four or five large classes with little time for individual attention. To enable teachers to get to know their students, *Breaking Ranks* recommended flexible approaches that would restrict teacher workload to a maximum of 90 students per term for most high school teachers.³

Breaking Ranks also proposed that every high school student should have an adult advocate to help personalize the high school experience:

Each student needs to know that at least one adult in the school is closely concerned with his or her fate.... The relationship between the student and the advocate should ensure that no youngster experiences the sense of isolation that frequently engulfs teenagers during this critical period of their lives. Having someone on his or her side can help a young person feel a part of the school community.

Analyses of high school reform efforts have underscored scaling down as a common condition conducive to academic success. Smaller schools can more readily provide students with mentors, tutors, and advisors; make learning more meaningful by linking it to work and community; and provide adequate time and support for mastery of knowledge and skills.

V. Research Supports Smaller School Units

Smaller is better in virtually every way you can imagine.

Kathleen Cotton, American Youth Policy Forum, April 14, 2000.

Smaller learning communities benefit students, teachers, and parents by making effective communication easier, offering opportunities for collaboration, and encouraging meaningful relationships between students and adults. Research confirms that smaller schools are more productive and safer because they can address students' needs more personally, reducing feelings of alienation, and connecting students with caring adults. All of these conditions create an environment that contributes to positive student outcomes: higher student achievement, improved attendance and graduation rates, and reduced violence and disruptive behavior.

The smaller learning community strategies identified in this paper are good for most students, but they are particularly effective for economically disadvantaged students in several respects. From an academic perspective, smaller schools and smaller sub-school units have a disproportionately positive effect on economically disadvantaged students, because those students tend to live in urban communities served by large school districts and large high schools. Smaller learning communities additionally create more safe environments.

³ The National Council of Teachers of English supports an even lower student-teacher ratio: a maximum workload of 80 students per teacher.

The research findings summarized in this section provide evidence that small size is at least a condition of improved outcomes in schools. The potential challenges associated with restructuring large schools are noted as well. Findings on the effects of restructuring large schools into smaller learning communities, using strategies discussed in this paper, are fewer and more recent than the small school findings, but there is evidence that significant benefits can occur when the creation of smaller learning communities is accompanied by sufficient separateness, autonomy, and distinctiveness among the sub-school units (Raywid, 1996).

Research on Small Schools

We have confirmed [the positive effects of small schools] with a clarity and at a level of confidence rare in the annals of education research.

Mary Anne Raywid, *Current Literature on Small Schools*.

Leading analysts who have reviewed the large body of quantitative research on small schools agree that there is an impressive degree of support for smallness (e.g., Cotton, 1996 and 2000; Raywid, 1996; 1999; Klonsky, 1998). Indeed, empirical support or justification for the large high school is rare, and those few studies that cite positive benefits of large schools for some students find those benefits outweighed by the disadvantages of large schools for many others (Raywid, 1999).

In her comprehensive review of literature relating school size to other factors, Cotton (1996) found that, for students of all achievement levels and in all kinds of settings, small schools have proven superior to large schools on most measures of student performance and school climate. That same year, Raywid's analysis (1996) yielded similar findings:

...Reducing the size of schools can increase student participation, reduce dropout rates, improve academic achievement, and enhance teacher efficacy.... Downsizing stimulates the move toward personalized "communal" schools, which result in independent benefits with respect to enhancing student engagement and achievement.... School downsizing efforts may be necessary to restore the conditions human beings need in order to thrive: to function as engaged and committed agents in their own and others' education. Finally ... downsizing may be necessary to schools' ability to effectively initiate the changes essential to improvement. While downsizing provides no guarantee that these other changes will follow, it may be a crucial step toward launching them.

Major impacts associated with small schools are divided into academic and affective Outcomes and are summarized below.

Academic Outcomes:

Smaller schools support academic achievement. Students' academic achievement in small schools is equal to or higher than their achievement in larger schools. The findings on academic achievement are equally divided; approximately half the studies show that students do equally as well in small schools as in larger ones; while the other half finds students in small schools do better on measures such as school grades, test scores, honor roll membership, subject-area achievement, and higher-order thinking skills assessments (Cotton, 1996).

Research on the school-within-a-school model is growing, with increasing evidence that they can indeed produce comparable outcomes to those of freestanding small schools. For example, an analysis of the National Educational Longitudinal Study found that improved student learning was clearly linked to schools that were restructured into smaller “communal” schools (Lee and Smith, 1994).

Smaller schools promote academic equity. Small schools help close the achievement gap between students from higher income, mostly white and Asian families and students from lower-income, mostly African American and Hispanic families (Klonsky, 1998). For ethnic minority students and students of low socioeconomic status, the effects of small schools are especially positive, helping reduce the damaging effects of poverty on student achievement; conversely, large schools have an especially negative impact on those students relative to all students (Cotton, 1996; Howley and Bickel, 2000).

According to a continuing Rural School and Community Trust study called the Matthew Project, smaller schools and smaller districts help narrow the achievement gap between students from poorer communities and their peers from wealthier communities. (The project takes its name from a passage in the Book of Matthew which reflects a concern that large schools may benefit children from higher income communities at the expense of children from lower income communities.)

This four-state study of 13,600 public schools in Georgia, Montana, Ohio, and Texas, demonstrated that reducing school size produced proportionately greater results for schools with more students from low-income families and that smaller schools reduced the negative effect of poverty on school performance by at least 20 percent and by as much as 70 percent in both urban and rural schools.

Initial results support these conclusions (Howley and Bickel, 2000):

- The larger the school, the greater the negative effect of poverty on student achievement. The less affluent the community, the smaller a school should be to maximize performance as measured by standardized tests.
- The correlation between poverty and low achievement is as much as 10 times stronger in larger schools than in smaller ones.
- Although the relationship between school size, poverty, and achievement holds true for all races, minority children are more likely to be enrolled in large schools.

In 1995, Patterson High School in Baltimore, Md., restructured its 2,170 students and 110 faculty into five schools-within-a-school with the help of the Johns Hopkins Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At-Risk (CRESPAR). Other changes included: a self-contained ninth-grade academy with interdisciplinary teacher teams; four-by-four block scheduling, an after-hours “twilight school” for students with serious behavior problems or criminal records; intensive professional development and planning time; and state-of-the art technology and communications systems.

Two years after the restructured Patterson High opened, overall school climate had improved dramatically, as had teachers’ and students’ perceptions of the school. Attendance and promotion rates had also risen. The school’s rating on the state of Maryland’s school performance index, based on attendance, retention, and functional test scores also jumped. Patterson went from having the second worst school performance index among Baltimore’s nine comprehensive high schools from 1994 to 1995, to the second highest rating two years later (Legters, 1999).

Smaller schools prepare students for the future. Students from small high schools do as well or better on college-related variables—such as entrance examination scores, acceptance rates, attendance, grade

point average, and completion—as students from large schools (Cotton 2000). Additionally, many smaller school structures focus on career-focused curricula.

The block scheduling that is increasingly used in schools-within-schools supports small learning communities, interdisciplinary teaming, and career-centered curricula because it enables teams to adjust schedules. Recent studies have found that students in block-scheduled schools score higher on standardized subject tests than comparable students in non-block-scheduled schools, and that block scheduling helps increase on-time graduation rates, college attendance, and improved test scores. Because block scheduling causes students to spend less time in the halls, it also contributes to reductions in discipline referrals and class tardiness (Legters, 1999).

Career academies are especially beneficial for students at high risk of failure, according to a study that examined the extent to which career academies affected students' engagement, performance, achievement during high school, and the extent to which they prepared students for the transition to college and work.

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation's career academies evaluation (Kemple and Snipes, 2000) confirms that career academies reduce dropout rates, increase credits earned toward graduation, and increase preparation for college among students with a high likelihood of dropping out of high school. The students considered at lower risk also benefit (although not as dramatically as high-risk students), with an increased likelihood of earning enough credits to graduate and completing more career-related courses and work-based learning activities without reducing their academic courses. Students at medium risk of school failure benefited from career academies when the school-within-a-school was most separate from the larger school and when they had access to large increases in interpersonal supports, suggesting that career academies' small-school features may be as potent a factor as their career focus.

Attendance is higher and dropout rates lower in smaller schools. Smaller schools have higher attendance rates than larger schools, and attendance improves for individual students who transfer from large to smaller schools. Small schools have a relatively greater effect on the attendance of minority and low socioeconomic status students and have lower dropout rates and higher graduation rates than large schools; states with the largest schools and school districts have the highest dropout rates (Cotton, 1996).

Smaller schools provide challenging curricula. The increased variety of courses that larger schools can support tends to include a broader range of introductory courses in non-core areas rather than higher-level courses in, for example, math or foreign languages. Also, only a small percentage of students take advantage of the extra courses in large schools (Cotton, 1996). A high school of 400 can offer a curriculum comparable in breadth and depth to that of a much larger school (Monk, 1987), especially when supplemented with distance learning and other technologies.

Affective Outcomes Contributing to Academic Achievement:

Student attitudes and behaviors are more positive in smaller schools, with minority and low socioeconomic status students most profoundly affected. Multiple studies have associated small schools with students' positive attitudes toward school, as well as with lower incidences of negative social behaviors such as truancy, classroom disruption, vandalism, aggressive behavior, theft, substance abuse, and gang participation (Cotton, 1996).

One study of high school violence concluded that the first step in reducing school violence is personalizing large schools by creating smaller communities to combat anonymity (Toby, 1993, as cited in Klonsky, 1998). Along the same lines, Cornell University Family Life Development Center's director,

James Garbarino, listed smaller high schools as his first recommendation for reducing violence among adolescents (Klonsky, 1998).

Extracurricular participation rates are higher in smaller schools. Students in small schools participate in extracurricular activities to a greater extent and in a wider variety, than in large schools (Cotton, 1996). This is doubly significant because extracurricular participation is associated with other desirable outcomes, such as positive attitudes and positive social behavior. Students in small schools generally enjoy participating in extracurricular activities more than students in large schools because their participation is valued more when there is a smaller pool of potential participants.

Smaller schools reduce alienation. Small schools foster a sense of belonging and minimize student alienation. This is especially important because students who feel alienated from their school environment tend to lack confidence, self-esteem, and responsibility for self-direction. Alienated students also participate less in extracurricular activities (Cotton, 1996).

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Blum and Rinehart, 1997) found that students who felt connected to their school reported lower levels of emotional distress. Feelings of connectedness to school were also associated with lower levels of violent behavior, less frequent substance abuse, and a delay in early sexual activity. What seems to matter most for adolescent health is “that schools foster an atmosphere in which students feel fairly treated, close to others, and a part of the school.”

Students feel better about themselves and others in smaller schools. Students’ perceptions of themselves academically and generally are higher in small schools, and they feel more connected to teachers and to each other. Interpersonal relations are better, both among students and between students and teachers (Cotton, 2000).

VI. Implementing Smaller Learning Communities

Small Size Plus Other Reforms

Making schools smaller seems to work in large part because school staff and students can more easily implement and adjust effective practices in smaller environments than in larger ones. Even the most vocal advocates for small schools admit that size alone is not the answer; rather, smaller size makes other reforms possible. Researchers concur with this view that school size has an indirect effect on student learning by making other desirable practices easier (U.S. Department of Education, October 1999). Conditions that promote student achievement—such as teacher collegiality, personalized teacher-student relationships, and less differentiation of instruction by ability—are more often found and sustained in small schools than in larger ones.

Smaller learning communities can be more flexible and student-centered than larger units, students take more responsibility for their own learning, and students and staff feel more effective when they have more control. Teaching teams, cooperative learning, content integration across subjects, experiential education, and other instructional approaches are more often found in small schools, probably because alternative teaching strategies are easier to implement in small settings.

Smaller learning communities make innovation possible by laying the groundwork for school as a communal organization rather than a formal, rigid, bureaucratic entity. Change becomes not only possible but expected. The midcourse corrections and “just-in-time” adjustments so lauded in the

business world become routine in small school settings. According to Deborah Meier, former principal of New York City's Central Park East Secondary School, "The school must be small enough so that everyone can know everyone else, and respond easily to needed changes.... Simple changes that would be impossible to make in a mega-school can be decided around the table one afternoon and implemented the very next day in a small school."

Finally, smaller schools contribute to educational equity, especially for minority and lower socioeconomic status students. Although small schools have proven beneficial for all types of students, minority and poorer students benefit disproportionately. Ironically, minority and lower socioeconomic status students are more likely to be in large schools and large districts, raising serious equity questions.

The Challenges of Creating Smaller Learning Communities

...Benefits are contingent upon the extent to which the downsized unit becomes a point of identification and affiliation for students and teachers.... [Schools-within-schools can be] divisive and likely to introduce contention.

Mary Anne Raywid, *Taking Stock*.

The research on small high schools and smaller learning communities is extensive, and their benefits are well documented, compelling, and persuasive. However, few changes occur without difficulties, and the process of creating smaller learning communities within larger high schools is no exception. Restructuring carries challenges beyond those associated with start-up of a small school, according to Raywid, because it requires teachers and administrators to do two jobs at once: operating the old system while initiating the new one.

Schools and school districts that embark on restructuring and personalizing their schools need to be aware of problems that may occur. A common danger is the notion that school size alone will improve student outcomes. Reducing school size is worth the effort only when it is one element of comprehensive school reform, accompanied by strategies specifically designed to personalize the learning experience and take advantage of the flexibility small schools offer. New school structures can provide the opportunities for success, but Raywid cautioned that structural change must be accompanied by changes in school culture to take full advantage of those opportunities

Raywid found that one or more of three shortcomings tend to be present when smaller learning communities in large high schools fail to yield positive outcomes: insufficient faithfulness to the small school concept, either in design or implementation; insufficient autonomy and separateness of the subunit or sub-school; and failure of cultural change to accompany structural change.

Schools-within-schools can lead to competition among the smaller schools, undermining the cultural climate of the larger school. Sub-school units have also been criticized for their potential as a mechanism and a rationale for tracking. Given the relationship between differentiation and effectiveness for restructured schools, the challenge is how to differentiate without tracking students by ability and excluding or isolating special needs students. Awareness of this challenge, and explicitly confronting it in the planning and implementation stages, can prevent it.

Students may have fewer class choices in smaller schools (although smaller schools may offer more depth through integrated curricula) and large schools are sometimes able to offer more, or at least a greater variety of, work-based learning experiences and other school-to-work activities.

Raywid identified four main issues at the root of concerns about restructuring into smaller learning communities: cost, staff conflict, student grouping, and conflicts with effective schools principles. Raywid cites research documenting other problems such as: allegations of favored treatment for students in sub-school units, isolation of small groups of faculty from the larger school faculty, unhealthy competition among faculty members, lack of consensus about direction and mission, and scheduling problems and space constraints.

Staff tensions may also arise as school culture changes, altering previous relationships and communication patterns. There may be rivalry among the subunits, as they compete for resources and seek distinctiveness and autonomy at the expense of the larger school. Groups of restructured schools offer ample strategies that help resolve staff conflict. Professional development, both preparatory and ongoing, is essential.

VII. Conclusion

Researchers emphasize that conditions designed to simulate small schools must be authentic; that is, the more independent they are, the more likely it is that smaller learning communities will match small schools' benefits. "Schools-within-schools, pods, house plans are administrative arrangements to simulate school size," Ohio University researcher Craig Howley cautioned. "The problem with [some] simulations is that they don't respect reality" (Robelen, 2000). Without a separate space, autonomous administration and budget, designated faculty, and distinctive philosophy, small school simulations likely offer diminished benefits, or none at all.

Three characteristics are necessary if smaller learning communities are to maximize the potential benefits of smallness (Raywid, 1996): separateness (establishing a collective identity); autonomy (projecting clear, identifiable boundaries); and distinctiveness (displaying differences that are perceptible to students). Only when these characteristics are fully implemented, allowing for complete administrative separation of the subschool and the creation of a separate identity are benefits of smaller schools most likely to be realized. Other essential elements are staff and student support, as well as support from the superintendent, school board, and school principal (Deweese, 1999).

The conditions created by smaller learning communities offer large high schools an opportunity to improve student achievement. However, smaller learning communities deliver on their promise only to the extent that they have independent control over school budget and staffing, space, schedule, curriculum, and culture. When those conditions are met, students in smaller learning communities may derive the same kinds of benefits as students in smaller schools in terms of academic achievement, attendance, college-going rates, social behavior, attitudes, and student-teacher relations.

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7. Required Forms and Assurances

Note: Copies of the standard forms shown from this page forward are available at the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCFO/grants/appforms.html>.

1. Application for Federal Assistance (ED Form 424)
2. SLC program grant application coversheet
3. Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)
4. General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427
5. Assurances: Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
6. Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (ED 80-0013)
7. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier Covered Transactions (ED 80-0014)
8. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Form LLL)

a. Application Cover Page (ED 424)

Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424)



U.S. Department of Education

Form Approved
OMB No. 1875-0106
Exp. 11/30/2004

Applicant Information

1. Name and Address

Legal Name: _____

Address: _____

City

State

County

ZIP Code + 4

2. Applicant's D-U-N-S Number | | | | | | | | | |

3. Applicant's T-I-N | | | - | | | | | | | |

4. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance #: 84. | | | | |

Title: _____

5. Project Director: _____

Address: _____

City State Zip code + 4

Tel. #: () - Fax #: () -

E-Mail Address: _____

Organizational Unit

6. Novice Applicant ___ Yes ___ No

7. Is the applicant delinquent on any Federal debt? ___ Yes ___ No

8. Type of Applicant (Enter appropriate letter in the box.) | |

A - State F - Independent School District
B - Local G - Public College or University
C - Special District H - Private, Non-profit College or University
D - Indian Tribe I - Non-profit Organization
E - Individual J - Private, Profit-Making Organization

K - Other (Specify): _____

Application Information

9. Type of Submission:

-PreApplication -Application
___ Construction ___ Construction
___ Non-Construction ___ Non-Construction

10. Is application subject to review by Executive Order 12372 process?

___ Yes (Date made available to the Executive Order 12372
process for review): ___/___/___

___ No (If "No," check appropriate box below.)
___ Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.
___ Program has not been selected by State for review.

11. Proposed Project Dates: ___/___/___

Start Date: End Date:

Estimated Funding

14a. Federal \$.00
b. Applicant \$.00
c. State \$.00
d. Local \$.00
e. Other \$.00
f. Program Income \$.00
g. TOTAL \$.00

Authorized Representative Information

15. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this preapplication/application are true and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant and the applicant will comply with the attached assurances if the assistance is awarded.

a. Authorized Representative (Please type or print name clearly.)

b. Title: _____

c. Tel. #: () - Fax #: () -

d. E-Mail Address: _____

e. Signature of Authorized Representative

Date: ___/___/___

12. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project period?

___ Yes (Go to 12a.) ___ No (Go to item 13.)

12a. Are all the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

___ Yes (Provide Exemption(s) #): _____

___ No (Provide Assurance #, if available): _____

13. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Instructions for Form ED 424

1. Legal Name and Address. Enter the legal name of applicant and the name of the primary organizational unit which will undertake the assistance activity.

2. D-U-N-S Number. Enter the applicant's D-U-N-S Number. If your organization does not have a D-U-N-S Number, you can obtain the number by calling 1-800-333-0505 or by completing a D-U-N-S Number Request Form. The form can be obtained via the Internet at the following URL: <http://www.dnb.com>.

3. Tax Identification Number. Enter the taxpayer's identification number as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service.

4. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number. Enter the CFDA number and title of the program under which assistance is requested. The CFDA number can be found in the federal register notice and the application package.

Project Director. Name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application.

Novice Applicant. Check "Yes" or "No" only if assistance is being requested under a program that gives special consideration to novice applicants. Otherwise, **leave blank**.

Check "Yes" if you meet the requirements for novice applicants specified in the regulations in 34 CFR 75.225 and included on the attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424." By checking "Yes" the applicant certifies that it meets these novice applicant requirements. Check "No" if you do not meet the requirements for novice applicants.

7. Federal Debt Delinquency. Check "Yes" if the applicant's organization is delinquent on any Federal debt. (This question refers to the applicant's organization and not to the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit disallowances, loans and taxes.) Otherwise, check "No."

8. Type of Applicant. Enter the appropriate letter in the box provided.

9. Type of Submission. See "Definitions for Form ED 424" attached.

10. Executive Order 12372. See "Definitions for Form ED 424" attached. Check "Yes" if the application is subject to review by E.O. 12372. Also, please enter the month, day, and four (4) digit year (e.g., 12/12/2001). Otherwise, check "No."

11. Proposed Project Dates. Please enter the month, day, and four (4) digit year (e.g., 12/12/2001).

12. Human Subjects Research. (See I.A. "Definitions" in attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424.")

If Not Human Subjects Research. Check "No" if research activities involving human subjects are not planned at any time during the proposed project period. The remaining parts of Item 12 are then not applicable.

If Human Subjects Research. Check "Yes" if research activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project period, either at the applicant organization or at any other performance site or collaborating institution. Check "Yes" even if the research is exempt from the regulations for the protection of human subjects. (See I.B. "Exemptions" in attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424.")

12a. If Human Subjects Research is Exempt from the Human Subjects Regulations. Check "Yes" if all the research activities proposed are designated to be exempt from the regulations. Insert the exemption number(s) corresponding to one or more of the six exemption categories listed in I.B. "Exemptions." In addition, follow the instructions in II.A. "Exempt Research Narrative" in the attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424." Insert this narrative immediately following the ED 424 face page.

12a. If Human Subjects Research is Not Exempt from Human Subjects Regulations. Check "No" if some or all of the planned research activities are covered (not exempt), and provide the assurance number if available. In addition, follow the instructions in II.B. "Nonexempt Research Narrative" in the page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424." Insert this narrative immediately following the ED 424 face page.

12a. Human Subjects Assurance Number. If the applicant has an approved Federal Wide (FWA) or Multiple Project Assurance (MPA) with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that covers the specific activity, insert the number in the space provided. If the applicant does not have an approved assurance on file with OHRP, enter "None" in item 12b. In this case, the applicant, by signature on the face page, is declaring that it will comply with 34 CFR 97 and proceed to obtain the human subjects assurance upon request by the designated ED official. If the application is recommended/selected for funding, the designated ED official will request that the applicant obtain the assurance within 30 days after the specific formal request.

Note about Institutional Review Board Approval. ED does not require certification of Institutional Review Board approval with the application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is recommended/selected for funding, the designated ED official will request that the applicant obtain and send the certification to ED within 30 days after the formal request.

13. Project Title. Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. If more than one program is involved, you should append an

explanation on a separate sheet. If appropriate (e.g., construction or real property projects), attach a map showing project location. For preapplications, use a separate sheet to provide a summary description of this project.

14. Estimated Funding. Amount requested or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines as applicable. If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, indicate **only** the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses. If both basic and supplemental amounts are included, show breakdown on an attached sheet. For multiple program funding, use totals and show breakdown using same categories as item 14.

15. Certification. To be signed by the authorized representative of the applicant. A copy of the governing body's authorization for you to sign this application as official representative must be on file in the applicant's office. Be sure to enter the telephone and fax number and e-mail address of the authorized representative. Also, in item 15e, please enter the month, day, and four (4) digit year (e.g., 12/12/2001) in the date signed field.

Paperwork Burden Statement. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1875-0106**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average between 15 and 45 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form write directly to:** Joyce I. Mays, Application Control Center, U.S. Department of Education, 7th and D Streets, S.W. ROB-3, Room 3633, Washington, D.C. 20202-4725

Definitions for Form ED 424

Novice Applicant (See 34 CFR 75.225). For discretionary grant programs under which the Secretary gives special consideration to novice applications, a novice applicant means any applicant for a grant from ED that—

- Has never received a grant or subgrant under the program from which it seeks funding;
- Has never been a member of a group application, submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, that received a grant under the program from which it seeks funding; and
- Has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal government in the five years before the deadline date for applications under the program. For the purposes of this requirement, a grant is active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds.

In the case of a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, a group includes only parties that meet the requirements listed above.

Type of Submission. “Construction” includes construction of new buildings and acquisition, expansion, remodeling, and alteration of existing buildings, and initial equipment of any such buildings, or any combination of such activities (including architects' fees and the cost of acquisition of land). “Construction” also includes remodeling to meet standards, remodeling designed to conserve energy, renovation or remodeling to accommodate new technologies, and the purchase of existing historic buildings for conversion to public libraries. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term “equipment” includes machinery, utilities, and built-in equipment and any necessary enclosures or structures to house them; and such term includes all other items necessary for the functioning of a particular facility as a facility for the provision of library services.

Executive Order 12372. The purpose of Executive Order 12372 is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The application notice, as published in the Federal Register, informs the applicant as to whether the program is subject to the requirements of E.O. 12372. In addition, the application package contains information on the State Single Point of Contact. An applicant is still eligible to apply for a grant or grants even if its respective State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc. does not have a State Single Point of Contact. For additional information on E.O. 12372 go to <http://www.cfd.gov/public/EO12372.htm>.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH

I. Definitions and Exemptions

A. Definitions.

A research activity involves human subjects if the activity is research, as defined in the Department's regulations, and the research activity will involve use of human subjects, as defined in the regulations.

—Research

The ED Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 97, define research as “a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.” *If an activity follows a deliberate plan whose purpose is to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge it is research.* Activities which meet this definition constitute research whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

—Human Subject

The regulations define human subject as “a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information.” *(1) If an activity involves obtaining information about a living person by manipulating that person or that person's environment, as might occur when a new instructional technique is tested, or by communicating or interacting with the individual, as occurs with surveys and interviews, the definition of human subject is met. (2) If an activity involves obtaining private information about a living person in such a way that the information can be linked to that individual (the identity of the subject is or may be readily determined by the investigator or associated with the information), the definition of human subject is met.* [Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a school health record).]

B. Exemptions.

Research activities in which the **only** involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following six categories of **exemptions** are not covered by the regulations:

(1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (b) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. *If the subjects are children, exemption 2 applies only to research involving educational tests and observations of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not*

participate in the activities being observed. Exemption 2 does not apply if children are surveyed or interviewed or if the research involves observation of public behavior and the investigator(s) participate in the activities being observed. [Children are defined as persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures involved in the research, under the applicable law or jurisdiction in which the research will be conducted.]

(3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under section (2) above, if the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

(4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

(5) Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (a) public benefit or service programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (c) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.

(6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

II. Instructions for Exempt and Nonexempt Human Subjects Research Narratives

If the applicant marked “Yes” for Item 12 on the ED 424, the applicant must provide a human subjects “exempt research” or “nonexempt research” narrative and insert it immediately following the ED 424 face page.

A. Exempt Research Narrative.

If you marked “Yes” for item 12 a. and designated exemption numbers(s), provide the “exempt research” narrative. The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination by ED that the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The narrative must be succinct.

B. Nonexempt Research Narrative.

If you marked “No” for item 12 a. you must provide the “nonexempt research” narrative. The narrative must address the following seven

points. Although no specific page limitation applies to this section of the application, be succinct.

(1) **Human Subjects Involvement and Characteristics:** Provide a detailed description of the proposed involvement of human subjects. Describe the characteristics of the subject population, including their anticipated number, age range, and health status. Identify the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of any subpopulation. Explain the rationale for the involvement of special classes of subjects, such as children, children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, persons with mental disabilities, pregnant women, prisoners, institutionalized individuals, or others who are likely to be vulnerable

(2) **Sources of Materials:** Identify the sources of research material obtained from individually identifiable living human subjects in the form of specimens, records, or data. Indicate whether the material or data will be obtained specifically for research purposes or whether use will be made of existing specimens, records, or data.

(3) **Recruitment and Informed Consent:** Describe plans for the recruitment of subjects and the consent procedures to be followed. Include the circumstances under which consent will be sought and obtained, who will seek it, the nature of the information to be provided to prospective subjects, and the method of documenting consent. State if the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has authorized a modification or waiver of the elements of consent or the requirement for documentation of consent.

(4) **Potential Risks:** Describe potential risks (physical, psychological, social, legal, or other) and assess their likelihood and seriousness. Where appropriate, describe alternative treatments and procedures that might be advantageous to the subjects.

(5) **Protection Against Risk:** Describe the procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks, including risks to confidentiality, and assess their likely effectiveness. Where appropriate, discuss provisions for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to the subjects. Also, where appropriate, describe the provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.

(6) **Importance of the Knowledge to be Gained:** Discuss the importance of the knowledge gained or to be gained as a result of the proposed research. Discuss why the risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits to subjects and in relation to the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result.

(7) **Collaborating Site(s):** If research involving human subjects will take place at collaborating site(s) or other performance site(s), name the sites and briefly describe their involvement or role in the research.

Copies of the Department of Education’s Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects, 34 CFR Part 97 and other pertinent materials on the protection of human subjects in research are available from the Grants Policy and Oversight Staff, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4248, telephone: (202) 708-8263, and on the U.S. Department of Education’s Protection of Human Subjects in Research Web Site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCFO/humansub.html>

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b. SLC Program Grant Application Coversheet

Coversheet**Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) Program
Grant Application Package**

1. Type of grant applied for. (Check one.)

_____ Application for Planning Grant

_____ Application for Implementation Grant

2. LEA Name and Address:

NCES District ID:

3. Name and Address of Each School Named in the
Accompanying SLC Application:

Name	Address	No. of students enrolled
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

c. Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs (ED 524)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUDGET INFORMATION

NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control No. 1880-0538

Expiration Date: 10/31/99

Name of Institution/Organization

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

Page left blank.

Name of Institution/Organization

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

SECTION C - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION (see instructions)

ED FORM NO. 524

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to vary from 13 to 22 hours per response, with an average of 17.5 hours per response, including the time reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, Information Management and Compliance Division, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project 1875-0102, Washington DC 20503.

Instructions for ED Form 524

General Instructions

This form is used to apply to individual U.S. Department of Education discretionary grant programs. Unless directed otherwise, provide the same budget information for each year of the multi-year funding request. Pay attention to applicable program specific instructions, if attached.

Section A - Budget Summary: U.S. Department of Education Funds

All applicants must complete Section A and provide a breakdown by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-11.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e): For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f): Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If funding is requested for only one project year, leave this column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e): Show the total budget request for each project year for which funding is requested.

Line 12, column (f): Show the total amount requested for all project years. If funding is requested for only one year, leave this space blank.

Section B - Budget Summary Non-Federal Funds

If you are required to provide or volunteer to provide matching funds or other non-Federal resources to the project, these should be shown for each applicable budget category on lines 1-11 of Section B.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e): For each project year for which matching funds or other contributions are provided, show the total contribution for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f): Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e): Show the total matching or other contribution for each project year.

Line 12, column (f): Show the total amount to be contributed for all years of the multi-year project. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this space blank.

Section C - Other Budget Information

Pay attention to applicable program specific instructions, if attached.

1. Provide an itemized budget breakdown, by project year, for each budget category listed in Sections A and B.
2. If applicable to this program, enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) that will be in effect during the funding period. In addition, enter the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.
3. If applicable to this program, provide the rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated.
4. Provide other explanations or comments you deem necessary.

**d. Notice: General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427:
Equitable Access and Participation**

Notice To All Applicants

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-382).

TO WHOM DOES THIS PROVISION APPLY?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program.

ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

WHAT DOES THIS PROVISION REQUIRE?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF HOW AN APPLICANT MIGHT SATISFY THE REQUIREMENT OF THIS PROVISION?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in Braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to vary from 1 to 3 hours per response, with an average of 1.5 hours, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651.

OMB Control No. 1801-0004 (Exp. 8/31/2001)

e. Assurances: Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)

OMB Approval No. 0348-0040

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the nineteen statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C.

290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to non-discrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.

7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §§276c and 18 U.S.C. §§874) and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clear Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clear Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, (P.L.93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1721 et seq) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.

17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act of 1984.
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this program.

Signature of Authorized Certifying Official	Title	
Applicant Organization		Date Submitted

*Authorized for Local Reproduction
Standard Form 424 B (4-88) Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102*

f. Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (ED 80-0013)

Applicants should refer to the regulations cited below to determine the certification to which they are required to attest. Applicants should also review the instructions for certification included in the regulations before completing this form. Signature of this form provides for compliance with certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying," and 34 CFR Part 85, "Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)." The certifications shall be treated as a material representation of fact upon which reliance will be placed when the Department of Education determines to award the covered transaction, grant, or cooperative agreement.

1. LOBBYING

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

- (a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;
- (b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
- (c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants, contracts under grants and cooperative agreements, and subcontracts) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

2. DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

As required by Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 85, for prospective participants in primary covered transactions, as defined at 34 CFR Part 85, Sections 85.105 and 85.110--

A. The applicant certifies that it and its principals:

- (a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
- (b) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application been convicted of or had a civil judgement rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
- (c) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and

- (d) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application had one or more public transaction (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default; and

B. Where the applicant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, he or she shall attach an explanation to this application.

3. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (GRANTEES OTHER THAN INDIVIDUALS)

As required by the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 85, Subpart F, for grantees, as defined at 34 CFR Part 85, Sections 85.605 and 85.610 -

A. The applicant certifies that it will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

- (a) Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
- (b) Establishing an on-going drug-free awareness program to inform employees about-
 - (1) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
 - (2) The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
 - (3) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
 - (4) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- (c) Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph (a);
- (d) Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph (a) that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will-
 - (1) Abide by the terms of the statement; and
 - (2) Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;
- (e) Notifying the agency, in writing, within 10 calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to: Director, Grants Policy and Oversight Staff, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W. (Room 3652, GSA Regional Office Building No. 3), Washington, DC 20202-4248. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant;
- (f) Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2), with respect to any employee who is so convicted-
 - (1) Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or
 - (2) Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;
- (g) Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).

B. The grantee may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant:

Place of Performance (Street address, city, county, state, zip code)

Check ☐ if there are workplaces on file that are not identified here.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (GRANTEES WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS)

As required by the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 85, Subpart F, for grantees, as defined at 34 CFR Part 85, Sections 85.605 and 85.610-

A. As a condition of the grant, I certify that I will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in conducting any activity with the grant; and

B. If convicted of a criminal drug offense resulting from a violation occurring during the conduct of any grant activity, I will report the conviction, in writing, within 10 calendar days of the conviction, to: Director, Grants Policy and Oversight Staff, Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W. (Room 3652, GSA Regional Office Building No. 3), Washington, DC 20202-4248. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certifications.

NAME OF APPLICANT	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND / OR PROJECT NAME
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
SIGNATURE	DATE

ED 80-0013

g. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion — Lower Tier Covered Transactions (ED 80-0014)

This certification is required by the Department of Education regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 34 CFR Part 85, for all lower tier transactions meeting the threshold and tier requirements stated at Section 85.110.

Instructions for Certification

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "lower tier covered transaction," "participant," "person," "primary covered transaction," "principal," "proposal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may but is not required to, check the Nonprocurement List.
8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in

addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

Certification

1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion — Lower Tier Covered Transactions

NAME OF APPLICANT	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND/OR PROJECT NAME
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
SIGNATURE	DATE

ED 80-0014, 9/90 (Replaces GCS-009 (REV 12/88), which is obsolete)

h. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Form LLL)

OMB 0348-0046

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352
(See next page for public burden disclosure)

1. Type of Federal Action: a. contract b. grant c. cooperative agreement d. loan e. loan guarantee f. loan insurance	2. Status of Federal Action: a. bid/offer/application b. initial award c. post-award	3. Report Type: a. initial filing b. material change For material change only: Year _____ quarter _____ Date of last report _____
4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity: ____ Prime ____ Subawardee Tier _____, if Known: Congressional District, if known:		5. If Reporting Entity in No. 4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime: Congressional District, if known:
6. Federal Department/Agency:	7. Federal Program Name/Description: CFDA Number, if applicable: _____	
8. Federal Action Number, if known:	9. Award Amount, if known: \$	
10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant <i>(If individual, last name, first name, MI):</i>	b. Individuals Performing Services <i>(including address if different from No. 10a)</i> <i>(Last name, first name, MI):</i>	
11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when this transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.	Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Title: _____ Telephone No.: _____ Date: _____	
Federal Use Only	Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)	

Instructions for Completion of SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

This disclosure form shall be completed by the reporting entity, whether subawardee or prime Federal recipient, at the initiation or receipt of a covered Federal action, or a material change to a previous filing, pursuant to title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. The filing of a form is required for each payment or agreement to make payment to any lobbying entity for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a covered Federal action. Complete all items that apply for both the initial filing and material change report. Refer to the implementing guidance published by the Office of Management and Budget for additional information.

1. Identify the type of covered Federal action for which lobbying activity is and/or has been secured to influence the outcome of a covered Federal action.
2. Identify the status of the covered Federal action.
3. Identify the appropriate classification of this report. If this is a followup report caused by a material change to the information previously reported, enter the year and quarter in which the change occurred. Enter the date of the last previously submitted report by this reporting entity for this covered Federal action.
4. Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the reporting entity. Include Congressional District, if known. Check the appropriate classification of the reporting entity that designates if it is, or expects to be, a prime or subaward recipient. Identify the tier of the subawardee, e.g., the first subawardee of the prime is the 1st tier. Subawards include but are not limited to subcontracts, subgrants and contract awards under grants.
5. If the organization filing the report in item 4 checks "Subawardee," then enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the prime Federal recipient. Include Congressional District, if known.
6. Enter the name of the federal agency making the award or loan commitment. Include at least one organizational level below agency name, if known. For example, Department of Transportation, United States Coast Guard.
7. Enter the Federal program name or description for the covered Federal action (item 1). If known, enter the full Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and loan commitments.
8. Enter the most appropriate Federal identifying number available for the Federal action identified in item 1 (e.g., Request for Proposal (RFP) number; Invitations for Bid (IFB) number; grant announcement number; the contract, grant, or loan award number; the application/proposal control number assigned by the Federal agency). Included prefixes, e.g., "RFP-DE-90-001."
9. For a covered Federal action where there has been an award or loan commitment by the Federal agency, enter the Federal amount of the award/loan commitment for the prime entity identified in item 4 or 5.
10. (a) Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the lobbying registrant under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 engaged by the reporting entity identified in item 4 to influence the covered Federal action.

(b) Enter the full names of the individual(s) performing services, and include full address if different from 10(a). Enter Last Name, First Name, and Middle Initial (MI).
11. The certifying official shall sign and date the form, print his/her name, title, and telephone number.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is OMB No. 0348-0046. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0046), Washington, DC 20503

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8. Appendices

a. Appendix A - Definitions and terms

(1) Definitions in EDGAR – Definitions defined in 34 CFR 77.1 are applicable to this program.

(2) Other definitions – The following definitions also apply to this program:

BIA schools are Bureau of Indian Affairs-funded schools, as defined by section 1139(3) of the Education Amendments of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 2019(3)).

A group of schools is two or more schools that each meet the definition of a large high school.

A large high school is an entity that includes grades 11 and 12 and has an enrollment of 1,000 or more students in grades 9 and above.

A low-performing school is a school that has been identified by local and State educational agencies using the criteria in Title I, Part A, section 1116(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which identifies for improvement any Title I school that has not made continuous and sustained progress over two years. In addition, for the purposes of this program, States and LEAs that have their own established criteria for identifying low-performing schools may use those criteria to provide evidence for the competitive priority.

Magnet School means a public school or education center that offers a special curriculum capable of attracting substantial numbers of students of different racial backgrounds.

(3) Terms - The following terms are used in this notice:

Flexible or Block Scheduling is a means of reconfiguring the school day. For example, block courses may be scheduled for two or more continuous class periods or days to allow students greater time for laboratory or project-centered work, field trips or work-based learning, and special assemblies or speakers.

Career Academies are typically schools-within-a school that offer students academic programs organized around broad career themes. Often integrating classroom instruction with work-based learning, academies try to equip students with the necessary skills for both workforce entry and postsecondary education.

Career Clusters generally refer to groupings formed around broad-based industry areas and address all types of skills, ranging from entry-level to advanced practice. A cluster represents those industries or career areas that have a high degree of commonality in work functions, knowledge, and/or skills.

Group of schools refers to the number of schools included in a group application. For the purposes of this program, the number of schools included in a single application may not exceed ten (10).

Houses generally are organizational arrangements that assign students and teachers to sub-schools. Students take some or all courses with their house members and from their house teachers. Each house typically has its own student activity program, student government, disciplinary policies, and social activities. Houses may be yearlong (within a grade) or multi-year (combined grades).

Mentoring Programs designate adults to act as advocates for students. Teachers, counselors, and other school staff (as well as community volunteers or employees at work-based learning sites) serve as mentors, working in

consultation with classroom teachers, counselors, and related service personnel to help students individually or in small groups, on a regular basis over an extended period of time.

Schools-within-Schools are autonomous programs housed within a larger school building. They are responsible to the district rather than to the host school's principal and are formally authorized by the superintendent and/or board of education. Schools-within-schools have their own culture, program, staff, students, budget, and school space.

Teacher Advisories are similar to mentoring programs. They organize adults to personalize the high school experience and support academic achievement. Some schools and districts establish advisory classes that meet weekly; others schedule students for less formal one-on-one or group time with teachers. Advisory activities may include helping students develop personal learning plans, introducing students to career clusters, helping students select courses, and working with students on postsecondary plans and pre-employment skills.

b. Appendix B – Annual Performance Report – Implementation Grants



OMB Control Number: 1810-0632

U.S. Department of Education Annual Performance Report

Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) District Cover Sheet

1. PR/Award No. (e.g. H185A200211-95)

--

See Block 4 on your last Notification of Grant Award.

2. LEA Name and Address:

--

NCES District ID:

Unless address has changed, repeat from Block 1 on your last Notification of Grant Award.

3. Total District Enrollment – Grades 9 - 12

--

Provide number of students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 during performance reporting period.

4. Project:

Title: Number of Schools Included in the Grant:
--

The title should be identical to that on the approved application.

5. Contact Person:

Name: Title: Telephone Number: Fax Number: E-mail Address:
--

Provide the name and title of the project director or other individual who is most familiar with the content of the performance report. Also include telephone and fax numbers and E-mail address.

6. Performance Reporting Period:

--

This is the time frame for the information requested on the Individual School Performance Reports. (See instructions for details.)

7. Current Budget Period:

--

See Block 5 of your last Notification of Grant Award.

8. Authorized Representative:

Name: (Typed or printed)	Title:
Signature:	Date:

**U.S. Department of Education
Annual Performance Report**

SLC Individual School Performance Report

Please complete an Individual School Performance Report for each school covered by the SLC grant.

SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION:

Name:
NCES ID:

SCHOOL BACKGROUND:

	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade	<i>Totals</i>
Size (number of students):					
Enrolled in the school					
Involved in SLCs					
Student Race Categories (number of students; report for all students enrolled in the school):					
American Indian or Alaska Native					
Asian					
Black or African-American					
Hispanic or Latino					
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander					
White					
More than One Race					
Other Student Demographics (number of students; report for all students enrolled in the school):					
Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners					
Disabled					

SLC STRATEGIES: (Please refer to instructions on page 5 to complete this section.)

Number of Students Involved in Each Strategy	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Adult advocates/ mentors				
Block scheduling				
Career academies				
Career clusters/pathways				
Freshman Academy				
Houses				
Magnet programs				
Schools-within-a-school				
Teacher advisory programs				
Teacher teams				
Other (please specify):				

STUDENT OUTCOMES

(1) Statewide assessments:

Please provide the number of students scoring at each proficiency level on the State assessment. Report this for each grade and subject assessed. State assessments differ in the number of levels of proficiency measured--please use as many rows and columns as your school needs. For each subject, circle the level of performance that corresponds with "proficient."

Subject	Number Tested	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V
Reading/Lang.Arts						
9 th grade						
10 th grade						
11 th grade						
12 th grade						
Mathematics						
9 th grade						
10 th grade						
11 th grade						
12 th grade						

(2) College entrance exams

Enter “0” if no students at the school took a college entrance exam.

	SAT	ACT
Number of students taking exam:		
Average score:		

(3) Other outcome measures:

Enter “0” if no student completed the activity described in the “Measures” column. If the activity does not apply to your school (e.g., your school does not have extracurricular activities), enter “NA.”

Measures	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
Overall reported ADA for October				
Number of students who graduated this year				
Number of graduates who attend a 2- or 4-year college within one year after graduation				
Number of students who take classes for which they receive both high school and college credit (dual enrollment)				
Number of students involved in extracurricular activities				
Number of incidences of student violence				
Number of reported incidences of alcohol or drug use				
Number of disciplinary actions (suspensions and expulsions)				

(4) Project status narrative

Refer to instructions on page 7 to complete this section.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Recipients of discretionary grants must submit an annual performance report. The report describes progress made by the grantee toward meeting project goals. [For additional information see sections 75.118, 75.253, and 75.590 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).]

Annual Performance Reports will be due September 30th of each project year. Grantees may choose to submit the APR either via regular mail or email.

- (1) Hardcopy submission. Please submit an original performance report, along with one copy. Reports should be sent to your program officer. Please check the SLC Web site for your program officer’s complete address in order to ensure its proper delivery. The general SLC program address is as follows:

Smaller Learning Communities Program
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

- (2) Electronic submission. Grantees may submit annual performance reports electronically, provided they can insert an electronic signature. A Word version of the performance report can be obtained from the Smaller Learning Community program's web page. The URL follows:

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SLCP/>

Once completed, reports may be returned to the SLC e-mail address. It is:

www.smallerlearningcommunities@ed.gov

The following sections offer guidance for just those performance report questions that are not self-explanatory.

I. SLC DISTRICT COVER SHEET: The questions on this sheet apply to the district—the entity that acts as the fiscal agent for the SLC grants.

- Question 6 (Performance Reporting Period). The performance reporting period refers to the school year just completed.

II. SLC INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT: Submit an individual school performance sheet for each school on whose behalf the LEA obtained SLC program funds. Please do not fill in the shaded boxes.

- Question 2 (School Background). Describe student demographics for all students enrolled in the school—not just those participating in an SLC.
- Question 3 (SLC Strategies). This question will be answered differently by grantees with planning grants and grantees with implementation grants.
 - Report the number of students participating in one or more of the school's SLCs.
 - Students within a grade level may be counted in more than one row. Some 9th graders, for example, may benefit from enrollment in a career academy and from team teaching.

Definitions of SLCs (also available on the SLC web page):

- **Adult advocates/mentors.** This model of personalization ensures that at least one adult knows each student well. Teachers, counselors, other school staff, and community volunteers--all of whom must be trained--can fulfill this "caring adult" role. Adult advocates meet with 15-20 students individually or in small groups on a regular basis over several years, providing rapport, academic and personal guidance.
- **Block scheduling.** Class time is extended from 45-50 minute periods to blocks of 80-90 minutes. The added time allows teachers to provide individual attention, work together in interdisciplinary fashion, and a greater variety of learning activities.
- **Career academies.** Career academies are a type of school-within-a-school. Career academies organize curriculum around one or more careers or occupations. They integrate academic and occupation-related classes.
- **Career clusters/pathways.** Career clusters are broad industry areas that address all careers within the area, from technical through professional. Career clusters identify academic and technical skills needed by students as they transition from high school to post-secondary education and or employment.
- **Freshman academy.** Also called a ninth grade academy, a freshman academy is designed to bridge middle school and high school. It responds to the high ninth-grade drop-out rate experienced by some high schools.
- **Houses.** With the house model, students across grades are assigned to groups of a few hundred each. Each house has its own discipline policies, student activity program, student government, and social activities. Students take some or all courses with their house members and from their house teachers.
- **Magnet programs.** Magnet schools generally have a core focus (e.g., math and science, the arts); they usually draw their students from the entire district. Magnets may or may not have competitive admission requirements.
- **Schools-within-a-school.** With this model, a large school is broken into individual schools. Individual schools are multi-age and may be organized around a theme; they are separate and autonomous units with their own personnel, budget, and program; they operate within a larger school, sharing resources and facilities. Students and faculty choose to affiliate with one school-within-a-school.

- **Teacher advisory programs.** With this model of personalization, administrators and teachers are assigned a small number of students for whom they remain responsible over three or four years of high school. The homeroom period is changed to a teacher-advisory period.
- **Teacher teams.** Academic teaming organizes groups of teachers across departments so that teachers share the same students rather than the same subject. Teaming links teachers who teach different subjects in a team that shares responsibility for the curriculum, instruction, evaluation, and sometimes scheduling and discipline for a group of 100-150 students.
- Question 4A (Statewide Assessments). Statewide assessments across the US report anywhere from three to five levels of student achievement (only three levels are required by ESEA— “partially proficient,” “proficient,” and “advanced”). Please report your school’s results using as many of columns as you need, circling the column heading that corresponds to “proficient” in your state. Do this for each subject measured.
- Question 4C (Other Outcome Measures). To ensure the comparability of data collected in different schools or in the same school over time, please use the following definitions of student violence and disciplinary actions. They are from the *School Survey on Crime and Safety* conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics. Please do not fill in the shaded boxes.
 - **At school/at your school**—include activities happening in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that are holding school-sponsored activities. Include only those times that were normal school hours or when school activities/events were in session.
 - **Violence**—actual, attempted, or threatened fight or assault.
 - **Disciplinary actions**—removal (for more than one year) with no continuing school services, transfer, suspension, removal for less than one year, referral to counseling or to a special program (to reduce problem), punishment (e.g., detention, loss of student privileges), or withdrawal of services (e.g., kept off school bus).
- Question 4D (project status). Report the progress made in enacting your proposal. Describe:
 - progress made toward implementing smaller learning communities;
 - activities and accomplishments in the year since the start of the project or since submission of the last performance report (where possible, quantify information on activities, accomplishments, and outcomes);
 - progress on goals and objectives; and
 - reasons why a planned objective was not attained, or a planned activity was not conducted as scheduled (include a description of the steps and schedule for addressing the problems).

III. BUDGET INFORMATION: Describe the current status of your budget expenditures. If you are not expending funds at the rate expected, explain why. Describe any significant changes to your budget resulting from modifications of project activities. Do you expect to have unexpended funds at the end of the budget period? If you do, explain why and provide an estimate.

For projects that require recipients to provide matching funds or other non-federal resources, also provide the total of all non-federal contributions as of 30 days before the due date of the performance report.

IV. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION/CHANGES : Please tell us about any changes you wish to make in project strategies, activities, or outcomes. Provide any other information that will help us understand the status of your project as you prepare for the next budget period.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0632 and will expire on 10/31/2003. The time required to complete these forms is estimated to average 8 hours per response, including the time to review instructions and complete the survey. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. **If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:** Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, Federal Office Building 6, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.

c. Appendix C – Annual Performance Report – Planning Grants



OMB No. 1890-0004
Exp. Date: 02/28/03

U.S. Department of Education

GRANT PERFORMANCE REPORT

COVER SHEET

1. Performance Reporting Period

1. PR/Award No. (Block 5 on
Grant Award Notification)

2. Project Title

4. Recipient Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

4. Contact Information

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Tel. #: _____ Fax #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

5. Cumulative Expenditures

Federal: \$ _____

Non Federal: \$ _____

5. Annual Certification(s) of IRB approval

Yes _____

No _____

8. Authorized Representative Information

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this performance report are true and correct.

Name (Typed or printed)

E-mail Address

Telephone Number

Fax Number

Signature

Date

Instructions for the Grant Performance Report for Planning Grantees
Smaller Learning Communities program,
U.S. Department of Education

I. COVERSHEET

Complete the Grant Performance Report Cover Sheet (OMB No. 1890-0004).

II. BUDGET INFORMATION

- A. Report your actual budget expenditures for the period of your planning grant.
- B. Describe any significant changes to your budget resulting from modifications of project activities.

III. THE PLANNING PROCESS

Describe the planning activities that the school(s) undertook during the planning year. You may approach this by submitting a chart of activities or by creating a narrative of the key activities.

Include the following elements:

- A. Stakeholders who were involved in the planning process;
- B. Data that was collected to determine the school(s)'s needs;
- C. The process and activities for researching restructuring models for smaller learning communities;
- D. The process for coming to consensus around the chosen structures and strategies for creating smaller learning communities and for setting clear goals and objectives for the school(s).

IV. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Submit your full plan for implementing smaller learning communities in your high school(s). A viable implementation plan will include the following components:

- A. Detailed description of the structures chosen to create smaller learning communities;
- B. Detailed description of the strategies chosen to complement newly created smaller learning communities;
- C. Description of students to be served and how they will be chosen;
- D. Description of key personnel who will oversee the reform effort and manage the project;
- E. Projected timeline for implementing the activities;
- F. Projected annual budget for the activities;
- G. Description of the activities needed to ensure effective implementation of the selected structures and strategies;
- H. Description of how the district, state, and any community resources will support the school(s)'s restructuring efforts.

d. Appendix D. Looking at Planning vs. Implementation Grants

	Planning Grant	Implementation Grant
What information should be included in the proposal?	<p>You will describe:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your need for smaller learning communities. 2. The process to be followed in establishing the basis for an implementation plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build stakeholder support for SLCs; • Conduct a needs assessment; • Become familiar with SLC research and implementation. 3. The steps you will take to ensure that the implementation plan is viable. Some examples are, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the needs of all students; • State the mission, goals, and objectives of each SLC and connect to student needs; • Provide an appropriate timeline; • Involve key qualified personnel to undertake project activities. 	<p>You will describe:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your need for smaller learning communities. 2. The soundness of the foundation underlying your school's implementation plan. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How student needs have been determined; • How stakeholder support was built and its extensiveness; • How the relevant research–base was used for restructuring. 3. The steps you will take to ensure soundness of the implementation plan. Some examples are, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connection between the goals and objectives of each SLC and identified student needs; • Align emphases, curriculum and instructional practices with SLC goals; • Align professional development with SLC goals; • Provide methods and timetable for placing students in an SLC; • Include timeline/milestones for project tasks.

	<p>4. The resources from the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District, and other sources that will be committed to the planning process. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ State, local, and other Federal resources; ➤ Administrative and managerial relationships between LEA and SLC. 	<p>4. The resources from school, district, and other sources that will support the implementation process. Including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of State, local, and other Federal funds to support the plan; • Limit expenditures on equipment to maximize direct service to students; • Demonstrate sustainability. <p>5. The system for collecting and maintaining high-quality student data for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring continuous improvement; • completing annual performance reports.
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e. Appendix E. GPRA Indicators

SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Goal: To assist high schools to create smaller learning communities that can prepare all students to achieve to challenging standards and succeed in college and careers.

Relationship of Program to Volume 1, Department-wide Objectives: The SLC program directly supports Objective 1.2 (schools help all students make successful transition to college and careers) through SLC program's support of curriculum redesign, professional development and student support services. The program also supports Objective 1.3 (schools are strong, safe disciplined and drug-free) because it focuses resources on personalizing and individualizing the education experience and creates smaller and safer learning environments for students in large high schools.

FY 2000—\$45,000,000 FY2001 - \$125,000,000

OBJECTIVE 1: STUDENT S IN SCHOOLS RECEIVING SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS WILL DEMONSTRATE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN ACHIEVEMENT IN CORE SUBJECTS, AS WELL AS EXHIBIT POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL CHANGES.

Indicator 1.1 Achievement: Increasing percentages of students in high schools receiving Smaller Learning Community grants will meet or exceed the basic and proficient levels of performance on state and local assessments.				
Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	Status: Unable to judge – new program. Explanation: New program. Initial grants awarded in October 2000.	Source: Program evaluation (to begin in 2001) and Annual Performance Reports (to begin in 2001). <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> 2001. Validation Procedure: No formal validation procedure. Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Unknown.
FY 1999:	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		
FY 2000:		Not Applicable		
FY 2001:		Baseline Year		

Indicator 1.2 Behavior: Increasing percentages of students in high schools receiving Small Learning Community grants will show improvements on measures such as school attendance and incidence of disciplinary actions.				
Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	Status: Unable to judge – new program. Explanation: New program. Initial grants awarded in October 2000.	Source: Program evaluation (to begin in 2001) and Annual Performance Reports (to begin in 2001). <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> 2001. Validation Procedure: No formal validation procedure. Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Unknown.
1999				
2000				
2001				